Lyme Bay Medical Practice

Covid-19 Vaccinations Update

**The practice has achieved the target of inviting all of our patients in cohorts 1-4 for a covid vaccination by the middle of February. This is a huge achievement which involved a big effort from everyone involved and we would like to thank patients for their cooperation and understanding during this time. If you are in one of the top 4 cohort groups and we have not been able to contact you, please call the practice to inform us.**

**The hard work now continues as we have moved on to cohorts 5 & 6. We again ask patients to please wait for the practice to contact eligible patients to offer an appointment for a vaccination. We must ensure that our phonelines are available to patients who have medical emergencies and need to speak to a clinician.**

**NHS England have started to send out letters to patients in cohort 5,6 & 7 to book an appointment at a vaccination hub if they wish to. It is your decision if you would like to have a vaccination at a hub. If you wish to have locally instead the practice will contact you so please wait to be invited.**

**Cohort 5 - Patients aged 65-69**

**Cohort 6 - Patients 16-64 that have an underlying health issue**

**Cohort 7- Patients aged 60-65**

**We have been overwhelmed by all of your lovely comments with regards to the COVID-19 vaccines and the clinics we have been running at Bridport Medical Centre. It has been an extremely challenging time for the practice but your support makes everything worthwhile.**

**Please continue to follow the guidance to control the virus and save lives**

**Thank you**

**Covid Vaccine Q&A**

**Why are patients being asked to not contact their GP surgery regarding covid vaccine invites?**

As well as the extra work involved of inviting, setting up clinics and vaccinating patients, the practice must still be available to patients who require urgent & non urgent care. We must ensure that our phone lines are accessible to a patient who may have an urgent issue and needs to speak to a clinician.

**The practice is currently inviting other patients in my age group, why have I not been contacted yet?**

Each cohort that the practice invites for a vaccination has hundreds of patients. Once a notification of a delivery is received the practice sets up a clinic and works through our cohort list for the amount of vaccinations we have been allocated. The vaccination programme is being carried out by PCN’s (Primary Care Networks), within our PCN we are partnered up with Bridport Medical Centre, Barton House, Tollerford House & Charmouth Medical Practice. If you have not received an invite, you have not been forgotten, we are working through the cohort list and you will be contacted and offered an appointment.

**How will the practice contact me?**

Patients are being contacted via text message or the telephone if the patient does not have a mobile phone number. Unfortunately, if a clinic is fully booked when you call back, you will go back on the cohort list and receive another invite when the next clinics are arranged.

**Are the clinics safe?**

Yes, we have all worked very hard to ensure that social distancing measures are adhered to, masks are worn, sanitiser is available and that patients enter and exit through different parts of the building. We ask that patients do not arrive early for their appointments as we need to ensure the footfall within the centre is kept to a minimum. If you arrive too early, you may be asked to wait outside or come back at your appointment time. We have received excellent feedback from patients who have attended an appointment at Bridport Medical Centre.

**Do I have to go to a vaccination hub?**

No, although the practice feels that this is a positive that a patient may have two options of either going to a hub or waiting to be contacted by the practice to have your vaccine locally. It is a patient’s decision whether they wish to attend an appointment at a vaccination hub or to wait until invited by the practice. PLEASE do not contact the practice to ask when we will be inviting you for an appointment so you can decide which is most suitable.

**Can I choose which vaccination I have?**

We encourage patients to take the first invite received regardless of the vaccination as both Pfizer and Astra Zeneca (Oxford) are licensed and there is no guarantee for how long you may have to wait to receive another vaccination. The practice has no control over the vaccinations that we receive.

**I suffer with allergies, can I have the vaccination?**

Patients who have had any anaphylaxis reaction in the past have been advised to have the Astra Zeneca vaccination. If you have any concerns, this can be discussed with the vaccinator who has a list of questions which includes a question about previous allergies. A clinical decision can then be made whether or not to go ahead with the vaccination.

**Why am I not included in a cohort?**

The practice must follow the instructions set by NHS England and the Joint Committee for Vaccinations and Immunisations (JCVI) as to who we can vaccinate. The majority of cohorts are based on age, but we do have cohort 6 which is patients 16-64 with underlying health conditions. Although you may feel your condition makes you eligible, the practice must adhere to the health conditions that have been set within cohort 6.

**I am a carer, can I be vaccinated?**

Dorset CCG has updated practices about which carers are currently eligible for a vaccination within cohort 6.

* If carer is the primary carer for someone is who in cohorts 1-6 i.e. they care for someone who is clinically vulnerable to Covid 19
* Are registered as an unpaid carer with their GP practice
* Or are in receipt of carers allowance

**I am a health & social care worker; can I be vaccinated?**

The practice has worked very hard to ensure that all health & social care workers have been vaccinated. We rely on patients informing us that they work in health & social care, so if you have not had a vaccination, please contact the practice.

**I have had my first vaccination, when will I receive my second dose?**

The current guidance is that patients will receive a second vaccination by 12 weeks. The practice will contact patients as we did for the first vaccination to offer an appointment.

Patients can also find further information regarding the covid vaccination programme on the NHS England website:

[**https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/coronavirus-vaccine/**](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/coronavirus-vaccine/)