

Worcestershire and Herefordshire Local Medical Committees Ltd

Our Ref: GF/RD/LJC/6172

11th January 2021

Dear Patients

Re: Supporting practices to deliver the Covid Vaccination Programme across Worcestershire and Herefordshire

We are pleased to tell you that all of our local practices have chosen to take part in the Covid Vaccination Programme. Groups of practices called PCNs (Primary Care Networks) have already made great progress in getting vaccines out to our most vulnerable patients over the last month, many of them working over the Christmas holiday period to get this done. We know that this tremendous effort will be reflected in the official government figures when they are released soon. There have been significant logistical challenges with the Pfizer vaccine but these have been worked through and now with the AstraZeneca Oxford vaccine coming down to local practices we will be able to provide even greater coverage across Worcestershire and Herefordshire.

It is clear that as cases continue to rise across England and within our own counties, the priority for general practice must be on getting these vaccinations out as quickly as possible to all those who are eligible for it. Simply put, the more people we can vaccinate, the sooner we will reduce the pressure on our hospitals and wider healthcare system and the sooner we can get back to some sort of normality. This is no small task for practices who are still open as they always have been and are trying to manage ever increasing demand on their services.

This vaccination programme will be the biggest ever undertaken and your practices are keen that they should be the ones to deliver it for you in conjunction with national and regional centres. In order to do that we will need your support to allow us to focus our efforts on getting the job done. I hope, therefore, that we can ask you to think twice before contacting your local practice for minor ailments whilst we manage our biggest vaccination programme ever. If you can look on the NHS website first and consider what self-care measures you could take it will really help to take the pressure off our practice staff and GPs. For more worrying complaints we will be there for you as we have been throughout this pandemic. Many of you will have long term conditions and some of your routine annual blood tests and checks may be delayed for a while without significant risk to you. We ask that you trust your doctor to decide what, if any monitoring is necessary over these next few months.

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Practices will continue to carry out strict infection control procedures and we will wear PPE if we need to see you in person to ensure your safety and that of our staff. These procedures are necessary to allow us to continue to provide a service for you when you need it and we would ask you to trust our judgement on how best to assess and manage your medical needs.

All patients who are eligible for the vaccine will be contacted according to the priority lists in due course. Please can we ask that you do not contact your practice as we will contact you when it is your turn. This, in itself, will enable those who need medical attention to get through on the telephone to us when they need to.

In summary, we know that many of you are keen to support this national effort and we hope that this letter is helpful in providing you with ways that you can practically support us to get this job done. Please follow the government guidance and know that general practice is doing all that it can to protect and support you at this difficult time.

Yours sincerely



Dr G Farmer
Worcestershire LMC Secretary



Dr R Dales
Herefordshire LMC Secretary