

Covid-19 and Flu update

Public Health

October 2023



Overview



Data on Covid-19 infection rates are no longer available (the ONS surveillance approach ended in March 2023).

However, a new variant, BA2.86, was identified in the UK in August 2023. The number of identified cases has been growing in the UK and internationally. UKHSA is working to understand health impacts.

Based on the threat of BA2.86, it is important we act quickly to protect eligible individuals through vaccination. The national vaccination programme was brought forward to 11th September 2023.

Due to the ongoing risk of a wave of infection and the threat of the new variant, we continue to focus on vaccination, outbreak prevention and management, communications, community engagement and outreach.

This builds on the lessons of the pandemic response highlighting the importance of flexibility, and localised communications and engagement through voluntary and faith sector partners.

As we move into winter there is an increased risk to respiratory conditions, it is a high priority to promote and support residents to get both vaccinations and reiterate messages on infection prevention.



Eligibility for COVID-19 Autumn booster and flu vaccination



The eligibility for the Covid-19 vaccine had been reduced, there is no longer a universal offer.

The eligibility criteria for Covid-19 and flu vaccines are similar but not identical.

COVID-19:

- All adults aged 65 years and over
 - Persons aged 6 months to 64 years in a clinical risk group
 - Residents in a care home for older adults
 - Frontline health and social care workers
 - Persons aged 12 to 64 years who are household contacts of people with immunosuppression
 - Persons aged 16 to 64 years who are carers, and staff working in care homes for older adults.
- *Note: Individuals who are in these groups and have not been vaccinated previously will be offered one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine as their primary course*

Flu:

- All adults aged 65 years and over
- Persons aged 6 months to 64 years in a clinical risk group
- Residents in long-stay residential care homes
- Close contacts of immunocompromised individuals
- Frontline workers in a social care setting*
- Pregnant women
- All children aged 2 or 3 years on 31 August 2023
- School-aged children (from Reception to Year 11)
- Carers in receipt of carer's allowance, or those who are the main carer of an elderly or disabled person



Ways to get vaccinated

Covid-19

- eligible individuals can book vaccinations.
- They will either be contacted by their GP practice to book an appointment or can book at a pharmacy via the National Booking Service:
 - Online: [Book, cancel or change a COVID-19 vaccination appointment - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)
 - Via the NHS App
 - By calling 119

Flu

- Flu vaccination appointments can be booked here: [Book or manage a free NHS flu vaccination at a pharmacy - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)
- Some individuals may also be contacted directly by their GP practice to book an appointment there.

Covid-19 and flu

- If eligible for both COVID-19 and flu vaccination, most people will be offered **both vaccines at the same time**.
- **Outreach and vaccination pop-ups** will also be available during the vaccination season.



Vaccination sites



PCN sites:

Site	Postcode
Newby Place Health and Wellbeing Centre	E14 0EY
Goodman's Field Health Centre	E1 8ZF
The Spitalfields Practice	E1 5PB
Wellington Way	E3 4NE
Harley Grove	E3 2AT
Sutton's Wharf	E2 0FA

Community pharmacies:

Site	Postcode
Barkantine Pharmacy	E14 8JH
Bell Pharmacy / Bow	E3 5ES
Boots Canary Wharf / Jubilee Place	E14 5NY
Britannia Pharmacy / Aberfeldy	E14 0NU
Britannia Pharmacy / Poplar	E14 0BE
Britannia Pharmacy / Riverside	E14 3BT
Britannia Pharmacy / Roman Road	E2 0PG
Chapel Pharmacy	E1 2LX
Columbia Pharmacy	E2 7QB
DMB Chemist	E1 2PR
Florida Pharmacy	E2 6AH
Green Light Pharmacy / BBB	E3 3FF
Green Light Pharmacy / Stepney Green	E1 4FG
Jaypharm Chemist	E1 2PS
Kamson's Pharmacy / Bow	E3 3EW
Lansbury Pharmacy	E14 6GG
Lincoln Pharmacy	E3 4QA
Medichem Pharmacy	E1 4LR
Nash Chemist	E14 7HG
Sai Chemist	E18EJ
Shanty's Pharmacy	E1 1DB
Tower Pharmacy	E1W 2RL



What we're doing to promote vaccine uptake



1. Developed a successful NEL inequalities bid to provide funding to several voluntary, community and faith-based organisations to engage with residents on vaccinations.
2. Collaborating with NHS colleagues to host pop-up vaccination sites across the borough and ensure vaccination clinics are accessible for all, with a focus on faith organisations and health inclusion groups (rough sleepers, homeless, and refugee & asylum seeker populations).
3. Working with Social Action for Health and Healthwatch to support other engagement approaches with targeted populations in the borough to increase equitable vaccine take up.
4. Delivering a local communication plan to support vaccine information and uptake, in languages, formats and channels used by residents.
5. Providing a bespoke training programme for health and social care staff to have confident conversations around vaccinations and address vaccine hesitancy.



Areas of focus

- 1. Vaccine supply** – there have been delays to the provision of covid-19 vaccine to providers as the start date of the winter booster was brought forward.
- 2. Outreach provision** – the NHS is currently identifying an outreach provider to offer the vaccine to inclusion health groups (homeless, refugee, gypsy roma and others).
- 3. Increasing the demand** – as shown in the graph, vaccine uptake for 65+ has been decreasing with each dose and booster provided. A cross-partnership approach is required to increase vaccine coverage for eligible populations.

