

Lambeth Together Strategic Board Public Forum Questions and Responses

Wednesday 20 January 2021



Questions to Lambeth Together from Nicola Kingston (Brixton and Clapham Park PCN), Helen Bristow (Croxted Primary Care Network), Jane Collingridge (Croxted Primary Care Network)

Congratulations and Learning Network participation by patients

We want to congratulate all in the health and social care workforce who are working so hard to maintain all services at this most challenging time.

We have extremely positive patient feedback from our PCN based vaccination clinics; e.g. how very simple, accessible and efficient the notification and booking process is, how efficiently the clinics are running, how very welcoming, friendly and reassuring the staff and volunteers are.

However, there are also many concerns and other feedback about the total vaccination programme which co-production could address.



Question

Will Lambeth Together provide resources to ensure there are local people and communities involved in each PCN ?

Response

Lambeth Covid volunteers are being deployed in PCN sites to support with marshalling and other non-clinical tasks to help the centres run smoothly. PCNs have told us that they greatly value the support from volunteers at this busiest of times. More widely we know that PCNs are supporting community take-up of the vaccine through a range of initiatives – some have made films with clinicians and community members promoting the vaccine as safe and effective, and informing their patients that they will be contacted. In Stockwell the film features three community languages.

Question

Can we in Lambeth ensure we develop an improvement mechanism to share learning which involves patients and communities?

Response

We have a range of ways that patients and communities can provide feedback on their experience of the vaccine rollout and help to improve as we go along. These include sessions with vcs organisations, faith groups, community connectors and elected members where participants can ask questions, share concerns and point to areas that might need improvement, based on their own experience or that of their members, service users, constituents, friends or family. Healthwatch Lambeth has also been actively seeking feedback from Lambeth patients and communities and recently held an interactive webinar. The CCG feeds questions and feedback to the Covid vaccination programme leads at Lambeth and SEL level to ensure that learning is captured.

Differences in vaccine roll out, and equality impact

Question

Patients have seen a lot of variation in the dates and sites for vaccinations. We understand there are, rightly, criteria for the selection of all sites and that sites are dependent on the delivery of vaccine for their clinic dates.

At what level are decisions made about the selection of sites and the supply and choice of vaccine?

Response

The final decision for approving proposed vaccination sites, and the supply and choice of vaccine that goes to these sites, is the responsibility of NHS England & Improvement (NHSE&I). Local Hospitals, Pharmacies and Primary Care Networks (PCNs) have and are working with local commissioners to make recommendations and requests to NHSE&I to inform those decisions on behalf of local areas.

Question

We recommend that at the earliest opportunity vaccine appointments should be available in each PCN in order to address issues of inequality. We see the roll out is essential to ensure inequalities are addressed.

Can you tell us if this is your plan, and when this will be developed?

Response

Vaccines are now available to all Lambeth GP patients at PCN hubs that are spread across the borough, as well as at two hospital hubs and four pharmacies. This provides a significant level of coverage and we are keen to reduce inequalities of access by offering a breadth of sites to access. This is under continuous review and we will evolve our site offers to meet the needs of our communities.

Question

Concurrently, patients have seen messaging from surgeries that patients over 80 (and other groups) should wait to be contacted, while the message from GSTT that has been conveyed via word of mouth across the S.E. London community, is that the vaccine appointments for over 70s can be booked proactively by phoning the hospital on 020 7188 4040 with your NHS number

Was this done as a matter of SELCCG policy, and were any specific messages targeted to BAME or disabled or vulnerable groups about this hospital availability?

Response

We understand that people may be worried about when they will be offered their vaccine but we are asking people not to contact the NHS but to wait until the NHS contacts them. The vaccine programme is being rolled out in priority order, starting with the oldest patients, health and care front line staff and care home residents. Patients should not contact any NHS service speculatively to seek to book as NHS services are very busy. Hospitals are continuing to offer the vaccine to inpatients and those attending for planned appointments but not to general callers

Response Continued

For most people, when it is the right time, patients will receive an invitation to come forward – this could be by letter, text, email or phone call, either from their GP or NHS England’s national booking system. This communication will provide all the information people will need to book appointments, including their NHS number.

Question

Will future messaging be targeted at specific disadvantaged/vulnerable groups?

Response

We are working through services and agencies that support disadvantaged and vulnerable groups directly to share key messages. In addition, we have a range of resources available to support communications with disadvantaged and or vulnerable groups. These include easyread leaflets and leaflets in many community languages, as well as a range of films and ‘explainer’ content that we are sharing on social media and through our community networks to explain how the vaccine works and how people will be invited for the vaccine.

Response Continued

We are also holding briefing sessions with VCS organisations, faith leaders and community connectors who will help us to spread the key messages and who will also share with us any insights they have around the vaccine campaign. For example, we have a GP attending a special session that Healthwatch Lambeth is organising for people with learning disabilities and are running sessions with other interest groups as the programme develops and depending on need and capacity. We will be promoting the NHS national and regional campaign that is running content on community radio stations and media outlets and on national tv.



Question

Whilst mixed messaging about clinics, in the early stages of the programme roll out is, perhaps, unavoidable, it has driven raised levels of anxiety in many people across the S.E. London community with some uncertain when they can expect to receive their vaccination invite and others becoming increasingly fearful they will slip through the net. What communications can be put in place to seek to reassure these people?

Response

Our very clear and very widely shared message is ‘you have not been forgotten’, and we are working with a range of partners in the voluntary and community sector as well as faith groups and others to share this message, as well as sharing this widely on social media, on the SEL CCG website and through our partner channels.

Question

Some hospital patients in critical groups have been told they need the vaccine before their non COVID treatment can continue, but they have not been given access to it. How can these patients have their vaccinations expedited?

Response

Patients who are in groups clinically extremely vulnerable to Covid-19 are being called as a priority for their vaccine. Patients who qualify for the vaccine now (as they are in JCVI groups 1-6) can also use the National Booking System to choose from a range of vaccination locations across Lambeth.

If patients are not currently in one of the priority groups (JCVI groups 1-6), but their consultant feels that they warrant an expedited vaccine (because they need it before starting some other urgent treatment, for example, and/or if the treatment itself could cause them to be temporarily clinically extremely vulnerable), their consultant can make a request for that patient to have an expedited dose. This is considered by a senior clinician and if they agree, the patient's first dose can be expedited (and the second dose, if required).

Response Continued

This includes patients who are about to receive planned immunosuppressive therapy, who should be considered for vaccination prior to commencing treatment (ideally at least two weeks before), when their immune system is better able to make a response. It is also advised that both doses are completed prior to commencing therapy.

As a more general reminder, patients who are clinically extremely vulnerable (high risk) can book their vaccine online at www.nhs.uk/covid-vaccination or call 119 without needing an invitation. Patients who are clinically vulnerable (moderate risk) from COVID-19 should still wait to be contacted by the NHS.

Communications in the community

Question

Please can you advise how local communities can be engaged and supported to develop consistent, appropriate local messages to help address health inequality issues and particularly issues with those reluctant to have the vaccine?

Response

We are working with voluntary and community organisations, faith groups and community connectors as well as our NHS and social care teams to understand insights from local communities in terms of attitudes towards the vaccine and how we might need to tailor key messages; on the whole this is by using trusted ambassadors to convey these messages, rather than developing new messages. We would encourage any group that can support the sharing of key messages within their community to contact us by email at lamccg.getinvolved@nhs.net so that we can signpost them to the many resources that are available that they can share. We welcome community members sharing their own experience of having the vaccine and their reasons for taking it up and if they tag us on social media we can reshare some of these if appropriate.

Question

Will patients receive invitations to attend PCN based, borough based and London vaccine centres. Simultaneously, how will confusion be avoided?

Response

Vaccinations are available in a number of settings including local hospitals, GP hubs, vaccination centres, pharmacies and care homes if people live or work there. Individuals can choose which one of these they take up and will receive full instructions on how to book.

Question

We believe that in Lambeth it is essential that for those who are not mobile and digital, the emphasis should be on local invitations. How will local people who are not digitally active be supported to get the vaccine?

Response

People will be contacted by the NHS via text message, phone call or letter, either from their GP or from the national vaccination service. Whatever the method it will include all the information they need to book their appointment, including their NHS number. Our information sessions with voluntary and community groups are intended to ensure that if people get in touch with them, these groups are able to support or signpost appropriately so that people don't experience undue anxiety or unnecessary delay. People will always have the options to receive the vaccine in a location that is local to them, though this may not be at their own GP practice. Our frontline staff working with vulnerable people including many who may have limited mobility or digital access, are working hard to ensure that this group of people has access to information and support to book their vaccine.