

13/01/21

Dear Patient Participation Group Member,

I am writing on behalf of the entire project team to advise you of our progress to set up a service from Newbury Racecourse to deliver Covid vaccinations to patients in West Berkshire. We have been restricted so far in what we are able to communicate so I hope that some further detail at this stage will be helpful and address some of your questions. I aim to keep you informed of our progress on site regularly as I understand the strong appetite to understand how we are doing. I am however unable to give precise figures for the numbers of people in each group vaccinated or planned to be vaccinated.

The Plan

Nine practices have decided to work together to meet the challenge of the largest vaccination programme in history.

Which Practices?

- West Berkshire Rural PCN: Lambourn, Hungerford, Kintbury
- A34 PCN: Downland, Strawberry Hill, Eastfield House
- Kennet PCN: Falkland, Thatcham, Burdwood

What about the rest of the practices in West Berkshire?

- Pangbourne Surgery and Chapel Row Surgery have already commenced vaccinations from Rosewood Hall, adjacent to Pangbourne Surgery. They are supporting Theale and Mortimer patients also.

Reasons for setting up a joint centre:

- Minimise disruption to practices so we are still able to support patients when they need us
- Easier to manage logistics and social distancing
- Builds on our history of working closely in West Berkshire such as with the hot hub.

Why the Racecourse specifically?

- Large space, used to managing complex logistics, helpful team
- Central location and good parking and access
- Familiar with site as used for the hot hub

Why has it taken so long?

- Because we were keen to minimise the impact on patients who need to access primary care in their surgeries, we have essentially set up our own version of a mass vaccination centre. This has required a lot of planning and GPs have been fitting this in around seeing patients. Likewise Practice Managers have been fitting this in around their day jobs.
- Now we are up and running we can easily catch up and overtake sites who have gone live before us, so long as we get the supplies through.

How will it work?

- Patient is directed to one of three lanes. There are four vaccinator pods in each lane.

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- Vaccinator completes assessment and administers vaccine. They have a data clerk with them recording patient information onto clinical IT systems, with paper back up if needed.
- Patient moves to waiting area for 15 minute period. After that they are free to leave.

How many people can you vaccinate?

- We can do up to 1200 patients per day at the moment although actual numbers depend on vaccine supplies. This number does not include care home residents and staff who we are also vaccinating at the moment.
- As we get used to the processes on site and get quicker we might well expand the number of vaccinators to do even more than 1000 a day.
- By the end of Sunday 17th we believe we will have vaccinated more than 1500 people including patients aged over 80, primary care staff and care home residents and staff.
- Between Monday 18th and Sunday 24th we believe we will have vaccinated all of the remaining care home staff and residents, the vast majority of practice staff and around 1500 patients aged over 80.
- If supplies of the vaccine continue to increase in quantity and regularity we will easily meet the government's vaccination targets by working jointly at scale.

What about people who can't travel to the Racecourse?

- We are going out to care homes to vaccinate staff and residents there.
- We are also going to work jointly with the Community Matrons to vaccinate housebound patients.
- We will work with local voluntary groups around transport as we begin to receive more notice of vaccine deliveries and can arrange transport to coincide with clinics.
- We have informed the taxi companies so they will know what to do if any patient comes by taxi.
- Community volunteers and NHS Volunteer responders can be called upon.
- In the interests of social distancing, patients should travel here independently if they can.

Thank you all for your support in this very busy time.

Kind regards,

Jo Reeves

Project Manager, Newbury Racecourse – COVID Local Vaccination Service
and Newbury Locality Manager, Berkshire West CCG