Vaccination bookings - FAQs for unpaid Carers

Updated 20 April 2021 – this information is updated on a regular basis. Please check www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/vaccine and www.healthierfuture.org.uk/covid for the most up to date information. If you would like help to understand this information or have any queries not answered here, please contact Carers in Hertfordshire on 01992 58 69 69 or email contact@carersinherts.org.uk

1. Which Carers are eligible to get the vaccine?
The first group of Carers invited are those who are aged 16 and over, support an adult who is at a serious clinical risk from Covid and with whom they have close personal contact or face to face contact.

Carers of children are not included in this phase, apart from Carers of children with serious neuro-disabilities with other complications.

You can get the vaccine providing you:

- Are eligible for a carer’s allowance
- Are identified as a primary carer by their GP
- Are receiving support from your local council or from a local carer’s organisation
- Are the sole or primary carer who provides close personal care or face to face support for an elderly or disabled person who is clinically vulnerable to COVID-19

2. When will I be contacted?
All eligible unpaid carers will be contacted in phases by the NHS when it’s their turn to receive the vaccine and will be given information about how they should book their appointment. This will either be at a vaccination site in their local community supported by their GP practice, or at a vaccination centre.

If you are an eligible unpaid Carer known to your GP, Carers in Herts or council services as a Carer, you can book your appointment here: NHS national booking service.

3. I am eligible but not known to any of the organisations above. What should I do?
If you’re not already known to health or care services as an unpaid carer over the age of 18 please, contact your GP practice to register as a Carer and arrange your vaccination.

4. If I am a Carer but not part of this eligible group when will I get the vaccine?
It is a phased approach and there will be more information on this soon. If you are part of a group already eligible to have the vaccine (for example, clinically extremely vulnerable) you can book your appointment here: NHS National Booking Service.
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5. Can my family/the person I support get the vaccine as well?

The person you support will be eligible for the vaccine if they meet the criteria of people currently being invited for a vaccine. These include people classed as clinically extremely vulnerable or who have a Learning Disability. See *Who can get the COVID-19 vaccine*. They can book an appointment here: [NHS national booking Service](www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/carers).

6. Can I get a Carer’s assessment?

All Carers are eligible to have a Carer’s Assessment. You can tell us you’re a Carer here: [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/carers](www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/carers). However, there will be a wait for this. You do not have to have had a Carer’s assessment to be eligible for a vaccine.

7. What do I need to take to my vaccine appointment?

When you are contacted, the NHS will tell you what ID you should take to the vaccination centre. You will need your NHS number which can be found on any prescription or letter from the NHS. If you don’t know it, you can use this service to get your NHS number: [NHS Number](www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/carers). You will not be asked for proof that you are a carer.

8. I’ve had Covid within the last 28 days, what should I do?

Please wait for at least 28 days after the start of COVID-19 symptoms or a positive COVID-19 test before your vaccine appointment.

9. After having the vaccine will I need to still follow infection control advice and wear PPE?

Yes. Once you have had your vaccine, it is still extremely important that you continue to remain vigilant and practice *hands, face, space and fresh air* at all times, and follow [government guidance](www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/carers) with regards to any restrictions in place.

10. Is the vaccine safe?

The vaccines approved for use in the UK have met strict standards of safety, quality and effectiveness set out by the independent Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA). Any coronavirus vaccine that is approved must go through all the clinical trials and safety checks all other licensed medicines go through. The MHRA follows international standards of safety. See the [NHS website](www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/carers) for more information.
11. Are there any side effects from the vaccine?

Like all medicines, vaccines can cause side effects. Not everyone gets them and most are mild or short-term effects. See the NHS website for more information. Even if you do have symptoms after the first dose, you still need to have the second dose.

Note that the vaccine cannot give you COVID-19.

For the latest information on rare blood clots, see the NHS website and Public Health England’s guidance.

12. Who cannot have the vaccine?

Please look at advice from the NHS and also consult the Green Book. If you've recently tested positive for coronavirus – even if you have no symptoms – you should wait until 4 weeks after the date you were tested before getting the vaccine. If you have a specific medical condition or allergy that is not covered in the advice please talk to your GP.

13. What if I am pregnant?

For the latest information, please see the NHS website and www.healthierfuture.org.uk/covid

14. Will the COVID-19 vaccine affect my fertility?

If you are planning to get pregnant, there is no evidence to suggest the vaccine will affect your fertility. There is no advice to avoid pregnancy after the COVID-19 vaccination. For the latest information, please see the NHS website.

15. Can I have the vaccine if I am breastfeeding?

For the latest information, please see the NHS website.

16. Do I have to have the vaccine?

Whilst it is ultimately your choice whether you have the vaccine, keeping people who need support and our Carers safe and well is one of our key priorities. So we encourage you to have the vaccine to protect yourself, your family and your friends. We understand that not everyone can have the vaccine for medical reasons.
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17. Can I choose which vaccine I have?
Different centres are offering different vaccines and we do not have any choice in this. If you think you have a health reason that will affect which vaccine you should have then you will need to contact your GP surgery.

If you are pregnant or aged under 30, see the latest advice on the NHS website on vaccines.

If you are aged of 16 or 17 you will be offered the Pfizer vaccine only, because this is the only vaccine that is licensed for people within this age group.

18. Where can I get more information about the vaccine?
Please make sure you only rely on reputable sources of information when you are reading about the vaccine.

If you would like help to understand this information or have any queries not answered here please contact Carers in Herts 01992 58 69 69 or email contact@carersinherts.org.uk.

NHS information on the vaccine
For information about the vaccination programme in Hertfordshire and west Essex, visit www.healthierfuture.org.uk/covid

Easy read guide on Covid-19 vaccination
Vaccine information in community languages which includes messages from NHS doctors, nurses and other frontline staff about the vaccines