



Department
of Health &
Social Care

directors of
adass
adult social services

Local
Government
Association



14 January 2021

Dear Colleagues

We are writing to launch this very important process to ensure that all frontline social care workers who have close personal contact with those who are clinically vulnerable to COVID-19 are vaccinated.

This letter is further to the [Operational Guidance: Vaccination of Frontline Health & Social Care Workers](#) of 7 January 2021 which signalled the immediate requirement to vaccinate frontline social care workers. The aim is to ensure maximum uptake of vaccination and timely, equitable access across staff groups. The Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for frontline community-based social care workers provides a framework for local systems to identify the eligible cohort of care workers in JCVI priority group 2, and the arrangements that should be put in place to enable them to access their COVID-19 vaccination.

The SOP is relevant to a range of system stakeholders, including but not limited to Local Authorities, the NHS, key partners such as the CQC, all employers of frontline community-based social care workers and their employees, regardless of the setting in which they work, as well as all providers of vaccination services. It recognises that the collective ambition to vaccinate the frontline health and social care workforce who provide care across hospital, primary care and community settings, brings different challenges, resulting in the need for specific guidance for deploying COVID-19 vaccinations to frontline community-based social care workers. The SOP therefore focuses on the processes by which local systems work together to enable equitable access to vaccination for this cohort, delivered at pace.

By mid-January, all acute, mental health and community NHS Trusts will be established as “hospital hubs” and the first vaccination centres will become operational. The capacity and coverage provided by hospital hubs is such that they will often be the default provider of COVID-19 vaccinations for all health and social care workers. Recognising that the social care workforce is, however, more diverse and dispersed than the healthcare workforce, Local Vaccination Services and Vaccination Centres will also work alongside the hospital hubs to support equitable access to vaccination and take responsibility for enabling COVID-19 vaccine delivery to all individuals within JCVI cohort 2b [as set out in the updated Public Health England Green Book 2](#).

The Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for frontline community-based social care workers is intended to support and build on local arrangements where these are working well, providing a framework and ensuring clarity on the cohorts. It defines what we mean by frontline social care workforce and sets out the roles, responsibilities and actions stakeholders within the local system need to implement to offer and optimise uptake across cohort 2b by 15 February 2021. Given the role of local authorities, working across communities, it recognises that they are best placed to support this, and we thank those who have already started this work locally by identifying a local lead to act as the conduit where needed.

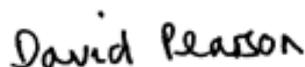
We appreciate that the social care sector is even more diverse than healthcare and involves a significant number of different employers, including individual service users through direct payments and providers within local authority areas with whom they will not traditionally have had relationships. Through the pandemic, a number of these relationships have strengthened and local authorities, often through their Local Resilience Forums, have been instrumental in liaising and supporting the social care sector, supporting on PPE arrangements as well as managing outbreaks and ensuring funding has been directed as needed locally.

The SOP will be supported by further opportunities for colleagues to ask questions, which we anticipate is likely to mark the step change in the number of social workers and their employers looking to access vaccinations. The pre-briefing session with local leads last week helped systems to be able to start planning for this and we would encourage you to ensure you have resources in place, through central email addresses or single points of contact, to enable effective engagement with providers and employers. Ensuring that there are strong local arrangements for joint working between local government and the local NHS vaccination programme teams will also be essential.

We recognise that this is something none of us have had to do before and we thank you for continuing to show such energy and resilience to make this work. There will be lessons to learn so we will continue to keep those feedback loops open, providing FAQs where needed and arranging opportunities for leads to come together and share good practice and learning if colleagues would welcome that.

In jointly developing and launching this document we recognise that crucial to the success of the programme and vaccinating social care workers will be the degree to which the NHS and Local Authorities are able to work together with social care employers to identify all the relevant workers and enable and support them to be vaccinated. We have seen great evidence of that in the discussions described above, and look forward to supporting the joint delivery of this critical process.

Yours sincerely



Sir David Pearson

Chair, Social Care Sector
COVID-19 Support Task
Force



James Bullion

President, ADASS



Cllr Ian Hudspeth

Chairman of the
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Emily Lawson

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