



TO:

- Local Authority Chief Executives
- Directors of Adult Social Care Services
- Adult Social Care providers
- Agencies

08 December 2021

Dear Colleagues,

Vaccination as a condition of deployment (VCOD) - extension to self-certification cut-off

While the vast majority of care home workers are now fully vaccinated against COVID-19, we understand that there are a small number of people working in care homes who cannot have the vaccination for medical reasons.

For this reason, we introduced a formal process to enable people to apply for proof of their medical exemption status to ensure they can comply with the regulations. Before that formal process launched staff were able to self-certify that they meet the medical exemption criteria.

We are writing to you to inform you that we will now be extending the cut-off date for self-certification for everyone who has registered a self-certification before 24 December 2021. **This means that self-certification forms will continue to be valid until 31 March 2022, so long as they have been received before 24 December 2021.**

The reason for this extension is because we are aware that some people who have applied for a formal exemption have experienced a delay in the outcome of their application being notified. Extending the cut-off for self-certification will allow sufficient time for individuals whose formal medical exemption is unsuccessful to be fully vaccinated before 31 March 2022.

Individuals whose formal medical exemption application has been reviewed will now be sent their notification letters in the post on 7 December 2021. If notification letters aren't received within 2-3 weeks for these individuals, they are encouraged to call 119.

Everyone who self-certifies as exempt from COVID-19 vaccination before 24 December 2021 will have until 31 March 2022 to secure formal proof of their medical exemption status. From 1 April 2022, they will either need to show proof of a formal medical exemption or be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 in order to comply with the regulation and continue working in a CQC-regulated care home.



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Care home workers who wish to apply for a formal medical exemption should do so as soon as possible and inform their employer of the outcome of their application once they receive it.

We would be grateful if you could share this information with your staff and professional networks so that the people who are affected are updated.

Thank you once again for your continued support for the implementation of vaccines as a condition of deployment regulations. Your efforts play a crucial role in protecting those most vulnerable to COVID-19.

Kind regards,

Claire Armstrong
Director of Adult Social Care Delivery



ANNEX - Background information

Self-certification

Individuals who have registered a self-certification before 24 December 2021 can continue to self-certify that they meet the medical exemption criteria for COVID-19 vaccination until 31 March 2022. They will need to sign the 'Self-certification form for people with medical exemptions' and show this to their employer as proof of temporary exemption status. Further details can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/temporary-medical-exemptions-for-covid-19-vaccination-of-people-working-or-deployed-in-care-homes>

As in our letter of 13 October 2021, we encourage care home providers to continue to follow Government guidance on [formal](#) and [temporary self-certified](#) exemptions. The latter clearly sets out the specific forms of evidence that the Government considers satisfactory in demonstrating that a person is exempt from vaccination for clinical reasons. We ask care home providers to strongly encourage staff who wish to self-certify as exempt until 31 March 2022 to use the [official self-exemption form](#) on the gov.uk website, and to take Government guidance into account when considering what evidence is satisfactory.

Formal exemptions process

Since 11 November 2021, all social care workers and volunteers deployed in CQC-regulated older adult care homes have been required to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

Health and social care workers who cannot or should not be vaccinated due to medical reasons must apply for a formal exemption in order to continue working in CQC-regulated care home settings. The requirement for proof of formal exemption will come into force after 31 March 2022. After applying, individuals should receive a notification letter by post saying whether their application has been accepted 2-3 weeks after it has been submitted. Those who have applied for a formal exemption recently should expect to receive their notification letter within this timeframe and are encouraged to contact 119 if they do not. Further details on applying for a formal exemption can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-medical-exemptions-proving-you-are-unable-to-get-vaccinated>

Please note that people who are pregnant are not required to show a notification letter to show they are exempt from COVID-19 vaccination. Instead, they can show their maternity certificate (MAT B1) to their employer. Further information on the MAT B1 form can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/maternity-certificate-mat-b1-guidance-for-health-professionals/maternity-certificate-form-mat-b1-guidance-on-completion>