

COVID Vaccinations Update 14th Jan 2021

Message from our Patient groups in liaison with Practice staff

What is happening about the Covid-19 vaccination?

As many of you are aware there are 2 Covid-19 vaccines agreed for use and available in the UK at the moment: Pfizer and Astra-Zeneca [Oxford]. Our Government has bought many doses of each.

It is fantastic news that we will have a large supply of vaccines but also a huge logistics exercise to get everyone vaccinated so that we can return to a more normal lifestyle. As a result, information seems to alter virtually every day and our surgeries often only have one or two days' notice about when the vaccine is arriving. Once we are notified of a delivery, we have to telephone each patient to arrange an appointment time, usually at very short notice.

Our Primary Care Network which consists of Hanscombe House, New River Health [Castlegate and Church Street branches], Wallace House surgeries and Watton Place Clinic, are combining to vaccinate patients at Hertford Theatre, mainly on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays [and maybe some Saturday mornings]. This is an efficient use of staff resources and also a safe environment for patients.

How will I know when it is my turn to have the vaccine?

Surgery staff are fully aware and empathetic about your understandable worries, but are finding it challenging to cope with the volume of calls at this point in the pandemic.

Please do not ring the surgery to ask when it is your turn for the vaccine. Our telephone lines are extremely busy.

The surgeries will ring every patient who is due to have a vaccine to book an appointment time. This is currently being done by age group, with the over 80s receiving their vaccinations now. We will be looking to move forward with patients in the next age group [over 75 years of age] as soon as possible.

You will receive an invitation for your free NHS vaccination in one of two ways:

- 1 By letter from the Stevenage mass vaccination centre at Robertson House
- 2 A phone call from your surgery.

Please be aware, that if you choose to have your first vaccination at Stevenage, you will have to go there to receive the second dose; the Hertford surgeries will not be able to offer this.

You do not have to go to Stevenage to receive your vaccination; you can wait to be offered a local appointment at Hertford Theatre.

For more information, please click on this link

www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-vaccination-why-you-are-being-asked-to-wait/why-you-have-to-wait-for-your-covid-19-vaccine

We will endeavour to keep you informed every week on the progress we are making.

Meanwhile if you can please avoid ringing the surgery, unless it is for a medical matter, that would be very much appreciated by staff. If you are on social media, then please send this message to friends and check in with the website for further updates.

Thank you.