



Sussex learning disabilities COVID response partnership. Vaccine questions and answers for carers.

These questions were received into the group via a carers support service. Carers are in a wide range of different caring roles for people with learning disabilities- from living at home with person they care for 24/7 to person being cared for in residential service. The group thanks those who took the time to raise these questions.

When will the person I care for be offered a vaccination?

The population is being vaccinated on a priority basis as determined nationally.

1. Residents in a care home for older adults/ staff working in care homes for older adults
2. All those 80 years of age and over/ frontline health and social care workers
3. All those 75 years of age and over
4. All those 70 years of age and over/ clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) individuals, including adults with Down's syndrome (not including pregnant women and those under 16 years of age)
5. All those 65 years of age and over
6. Adults aged 16 to 65 years in an at-risk group (including individuals with cerebral palsy, severe or profound learning disabilities, or Down's syndrome and unpaid carers under 65 years)
7. All those 60 years of age and over
8. All those 55 years of age and over
9. All those 50 years of age and over

Everyone in the priority list will be offered the vaccine as soon as possible. Exact timing for each group will depend on supplies arriving. There are examples of people with Down's syndrome receiving their vaccine in Sussex.

When will I (as a carer) be offered a vaccination?

- Priority 2 – all carers over the age of 80
- Priority 3 – all carers over the age of 75
- Priority 4 – all carers over the age of 70
- Priority 5 – all carers over the age of 65
- Priority 6 – all carers between the ages 16-64



You do not need to be registered as a carer with your GP to receive the vaccination in priority group 6. You may wish to tell them about your caring role the next time you speak with them, to ensure they are aware of your carer status, but please do not make an appointment or telephone your practice especially.

Carer registration is not necessary for you to be invited for a COVID-19 vaccination locally.

If 2 or more adults in a household help care for someone, can they all have the vaccination as carers?

Yes

Will carers be able to have vaccination at same appointment as the person they care for?

This an example of a reasonable adjustment if the person with learning disabilities would benefit from observing their carer having the vaccine. If both are priority 6 then this is even more appropriate. Inform the GP surgery of this reasonable adjustment.

Is the vaccination available for people with a learning disability who are 16+ or 18+, what is counted as an adult?

The UK vaccination propriety list is based on age. Those over 16 who are CEV will be offered the vaccine 16+ as priority 4. Those over 18 are adults.

When will PAs be offered a vaccination?

PAs should have been invited in for their vaccine under priority 2.

We employ a PA privately, how will the NHS know they are working as a PA so they can have vaccination with care workers in Priority 2 group.

The PA should contact their GP in the first instance. Evidence may be required.

How will we receive an invite for vaccination?

This depends on where you are receiving you invite from. Mass vaccination centres are sending out letter sand if you require reasonable adjustments there will a number to call on the letter. Some GP surgeries are booking by phone where you will be able to agree what reasonable adjustments are required.

Will there be disabled access and parking close by?



Parking has been allocated close to all mass vaccination centres. Disabled access is a legal requirement.

Will we have to wait in a queue?

All reports are that queuing is minimal. If you are supporting someone that is unable to queue due to their disability then inform the centre on booking. If they are unable to meet the person's need consider whether there is a more appropriate time and place. This is particularly important for those who may have complex needs but it is reasonable to arrange planning around this.

Will there be more time allowed for appointments for people who need it, so they don't feel pressured?

Yes, this is a reasonable adjustment but it is important that these are planned for if required. You can do this when booking the appointment. Reasonable adjustments are a legal requirement under the Equalities Act.

Can the young person I care for have their vaccine in a familiar place?

If they are familiar with their GP surgery then this may be best. There are examples of vaccines being administered in the surgery care park as a reasonable adjustment.

Will there be quiet rooms/space for people who need it?

If this is required as a reasonable adjustment which, as able should be planned for.

Will the person administering the injection have experience/understanding of additional needs people may have?

Not necessarily but they are required to provide reasonable adjustment on an individual basis. If they need additional information it is best they know this prior.

Is there an alternative for people who have a phobia of needles?

Not currently. It is very important to have talked about and watched the available films though to help understanding and reduce fears.

What will happen if my son/daughter says they don't want to have the vaccination on the day?



If you are worried that the vaccine may be declined on the day then you can refer to your local specialist team to support with education and planning by way of reasonable adjustments. This is much better than worrying that it will be declined on the day.

I don't think my son/daughter has capacity to make a decision themselves about having a vaccination, can I give consent on their behalf? If not, what will happen?

Only those with lasting power of attorney or court appointed deputies can consent on behalf of a person over 16. Whilst you do not need to consent the decision is made in their best interest and you must be consulted. Depending on complexity this may be an informal or formal process.

The person I care for is unable to leave the home, how will they get a vaccine.

They should be included in the vaccine at home programme. Inform your GP and or specialist team for advice.

The person I support won't wear a mask, can they still have vaccine?

There are examples in Sussex of practices working with people to have their vaccine where they know the person will not tolerate wearing a mask. This will require planning as a reasonable adjustment.

If it's agreed that the person I support needs a physical intervention, will the person carrying out the vaccine still be happy to do it?

If a person required a physical intervention to receive their vaccine specialist input will be required to determine the plan. This plan should involve the person administering the vaccine. It is expected that a few people will require this specialist support but the vaccine may only be administered if this planning has been undertaken.

Will I be able to stay with the person I care for while they have their vaccination?

Yes

What are the likely side effects?

There may be some pain and paracetamol can be taken before. Other side effects are rare.

Will I still be able to care for my son/daughter after I have had the vaccine?

Yes.

What age will the Mental Capacity Apply to the person I care for, is it 16 or 18?



The Mental Capacity Act applies to those over the age of 16. If the person you care for lacks capacity or will need support and reasonable adjustments to be made to enable them to have the Vaccine, please speak to their GP or Learning Disability Worker who will be able to ensure that the right support is in place.

If you have any general questions about the COVID-19 vaccine and the local vaccination centres

Please contact the CCG's Communication and Public Involvement team using the contact details below:

Email: sxccg.vaccineenquiries@nhs.net

Telephone: 01273 238 725

Information for carers

West Sussex - Carers Support West Sussex

<https://www.carerssupport.org.uk/> 0300 028 888

Brighton and Hove – Carers Hub <https://carershub.co.uk/>

01273 977 000

East Sussex – Care for the carers <https://www.cftc.org.uk/>

01323 738390 text 07860 077300