

Information to SPECTRUM Members concerning how Covid 19 vaccines are being arranged for your Personal Assistants (PAs), as part of the general Health & Social Care Workforce



Centre for
Independent
Living CIC

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Introduction:

This paper brings together information for users of Direct Payments and Personal Health Budgets, to ensure their PA's are included in the tier for vaccinating Health & Social Care workers.

These guidelines are intended primarily for Disabled & Older People who have been designated Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (due to Covid 19), who live in Southampton or Hampshire; although it may have uses in other situations.

This is a rapidly developing subject, and this document will change therefore as new information comes to light.

Current position in vaccinating people against Covid 19:

NB: See Annex 1 for priority groups for vaccinating.

- Priority 1: All those over 80 years old, care homes residents and staff are currently being vaccinated
- Priority 2/3: Currently or very soon, those over 70 and Health & Social Care Workers, will be vaccinated
- Priority 4: After these groups are done, those who have been designated Clinically Extremely Vulnerable [CEV] (Disabled People and people with certain health conditions) will be vaccinated
- The Government has promised to vaccinate everyone in the 4 priority groups by the 15th February
- NB: Other Disabled People at risk if they get Covid 19, are in priority group 6 (Check with your GP if you are allocated to this group)

Continued...

Ensuring Personal Assistants are included in priority groups 2/3:

For those Disabled & Older People using Direct Payments, Personal Health Budgets (and potentially self funders), that employ Personal Assistants (PAs or Carers), it is vitally important that these workers are included as Health & Social Care Workers, and therefore receive vaccines as priority group 2/3.

After lobbying by Disability activists, [new government guidance](#) has clarified that:

“it is vital that we identify and reach directly employed personal assistants, who support people within ... the clinically vulnerable and adults... as part of our efforts to ensure full coverage of the priority 2 cohort”

However, not all Local Authorities seem to be aware that they are expected to take a lead role in identifying social care staff, resulting in the risk of Disabled People and their PAs being left behind, extending the length of time they are at preventable risk of infection from Covid 19.

Disabled & Older People, and their organisations are therefore urged to be proactive and ask their GPs to vaccinate them and their personal assistants, following the publication of new government guidance. As Baroness Jane Campbell has said:

“What’s the point of vaccinated care workers when they can still carry the virus and give it to the CEV person?”

What is happening in Southampton and Hampshire?

SPECTRUM has established what the developing plans in Southampton and Hampshire are:

For people living in Southampton

- Health and Social Care departments will be contacting their Direct Payments and Personal Health Budget users [we don't know when?]
- All these will be contacted and informed of the on-line portal that [they/their PAs?] will need to use to get a vaccination appointment
- There are currently 2 vaccinating centres in Southampton
- No reminders will be sent to ensure everyone gets a jab – you will need to book an appointment as no reminders will be sent.

SPECTRUM pointed out that many will not have internet accesses and some people will need support and reminders to ensure they do not get left behind. SPECTRUM

has offered to help develop a robust plan which covers these and other issues. That offer has been accepted in principle but we are still waiting to be involved.

For people living in Hampshire

Hampshire County Council (HCC) are including PA's in the social care workforce vaccination programme.

HCC will be writing to every Direct Payment service user across Hampshire in order to enable you to identify PA's in care as well as going through agencies to help us identify those PA's who aren't employed by a DP user.

If you are not contacted shortly, please contact HCC directly, or contact your Direct Payments Support Service (Enham) who will assist you .

Frequently asked questions:

Question 1.

Can family members or family carers giving unpaid support have the vaccine as well?

- The guidance at the moment only allows this offer to paid carers. Paid carers include those who are funded and paid through a Direct Payment or Personal Health Budget.

Question 2.

Can the person who receives a Direct Payment or a Personal Health Budget be vaccinated at the same time?

- The responsibility for the vaccination of person who receives a Direct Payment or a Personal Health Budget remains with the person's GP.

Question 3.

How do I book a vaccine for my PA's?

- HCC will send out further details as soon as we have confirmation on how you are able to book a vaccine for your PA's.

Question 4.

Are other vulnerable people in the same household also entitled to the vaccine i.e. elderly parents or other vulnerable children?

- Anyone living in the same household will come under the responsibility of their GP's surgery.

Annex 1: Number of people in each cohort for vaccination under JCVI* priorities

(*The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation)

	Priority group	England	UK	% deaths attributed to cohorts
Care home residents	1	0.3m	0.3m	-
Residential care workers	1	0.4m	0.5m	-
80+	2	2.8m	3.3m	-
Healthcare Workers	2	2.0m	2.4m	-
Social Care Workers	2	1.2m	1.4m	-
75-79	3	1.9m	2.3m	-
70-74	4	2.7m	3.2m	-
Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (under 70)	4	1.0m	1.2m	-
Total priority cohorts 1 to 4	-	~12m	~15m	88%
65-69	5	2.4m	2.9m	-
At Risk (under 65)	6	6.1m	7.3m	-
60-64	7	1.5m	1.8m	-
55-59	8	2.0m	2.4m	-
50-54	9	2.3m	2.8m	-
Total priority cohorts 5 to 9	-	~14m	~17m	11%
Total priority group population	-	~27m	~32m	99%
Rest of adult population	-	~18m	~21m	-
Total	-	~44m	~53m	-

Source: Policy paper, UK Government COVID-19 vaccines delivery plan

Acknowledgements: <https://www.disabilitynewsservice.com/peer-calls-for-disabled-people-to-take-control-over-pa-vaccinations/>