



Department  
of Health &  
Social Care

**CARE**

Adult Social Care Delivery Directorate  
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London  
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**To:**

Local Authority Chief Executives  
Directors of Adult Social Care Services  
Social Care Recruitment Agencies  
Agency representative bodies

16 December 2021

Dear Colleagues,

**Vaccine Information for Agency Staff in Adult Social Care**

Agency staff play a vital role in the delivery of care so we are keen to ensure they can access the information and support available to all social care workers. I am therefore writing to share our key messages on winter vaccines and to ask for your help in disseminating the information and links below with agency staff in your networks.

*COVID-19 vaccination*

The COVID-19 vaccination programme has successfully weakened the link between infection, hospitalisation and deaths. However, we know there is further to go to ensure the highest possible protection for social care staff and people receiving care. It is therefore vital that agency staff are supported to access their winter vaccinations.

Please continue to encourage all agency staff who have not received their first or second dose of the COVID-19 vaccine to take up the offer as soon as possible. Please also encourage all agency staff to access a booster vaccination as soon as they are eligible – at least three months since their second dose – and to take up the offer of a booster when the care home they are working in is being visited by a vaccination team. Staff can also book their COVID-19 vaccinations through the [National Booking Service](#) (NBS) or by calling 119 free of charge. They can book from two months after their second dose to secure an appointment for as soon as they become eligible and do not need their NHS number to do so. However they do need to be registered with a GP in England.



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### *Vaccination as a Condition of Deployment (VCOD)*

Please ensure that staff are aware that, as of 11 November 2021, care homes are required to only deploy staff who have received a complete course (first and second dose) of COVID-19 vaccination. This applies to agency staff as well as directly employed staff. The requirement is subject to certain exemptions and you can find updated information on exemptions and the deadlines that apply here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/temporary-medical-exemptions-for-covid-19-vaccination-of-people-working-or-deployed-in-care-homes>.

The Government has also committed to a similar requirement coming into force in the wider health and social care sector next April. Following approval by parliament on 14 December, the regulations to implement this will be made early in 2022. Once the regulations are made, there will be a 12-week grace period before the requirement comes into force to allow those who have not yet been vaccinated to have both doses.

### *Flu*

It is also important for agency staff to receive a flu vaccine, which is available to all eligible frontline social care workers right now. Any members of staff who don't have access to an employer flu programme should be encouraged to [book an appointment](#) as soon as possible through their GP practice or local pharmacy.

### *Communications – materials, toolkit and newsletter*

To help you and the social care providers you work with promote winter vaccinations among agency staff, we have a range of marketing materials available including Q&A leaflets, posters, social media content and stickers. You can download digital versions [here](#). We also have a [communications toolkit](#) available which includes materials that can be used to build confidence in the vaccines and encourage staff to take up the offer.

Additionally, the Department of Health and Social Care produces a weekly newsletter – ASC Update – where we share the latest on the national vaccination programme and regulations, as well as wider developments within adult social care. You can sign up for our newsletter [here](#).

Thank you again for all your support. Your efforts play a crucial role in protecting those most vulnerable to COVID-19.

Kind regards,



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A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Armstrong".

Claire Armstrong

Director of Adult Social Care Delivery