

Date: 22 March 2021

Dear Carer,

Re: COVID-19 Vaccination

Firstly, we would like to express our sincere thanks to you for working so hard, particularly over this last year, to protect and care for the most vulnerable people in Shropshire. We are extremely grateful to you.

We are also writing to talk to you about the vaccine; As someone who cares for vulnerable residents in Shropshire we are writing to encourage you to take up the offer of a Covid-19 vaccination, if you haven't done so already. Over 230,000 people living in Shropshire Telford & Wrekin have already had the vaccine.

There is now very strong evidence that the vaccine is safe and is reducing the number of people being admitted to hospital with Covid-19 and the number of cases in older people.

We believe it is vitally important that all care staff have their vaccinations now to protect themselves, their families and the people they care for.

From feedback we know that some of you are still unsure about having the vaccination. It is important therefore to remember that COVID is a serious illness with long-lasting health impacts for some, including for younger people. We also want you to know that the evidence in favour of the COVID vaccines is extremely strong and in particular it is important to recognise that:

- The vaccine is safe and very effective
- The vast majority of vaccine side effects are mild
- There is no evidence that the vaccines have any effect on fertility

If you would like more information in order to make your decision, please visit:

- [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) vaccine - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)

For local information, and Q&As (including in different languages) please visit:

- www.sath.nhs.uk
- <https://www.spic.co.uk/resource-category/covid-vaccinations/>
- Pregnancy and fertility webinar for staff and care workers – 24 March, 2-3pm
A webinar is being held next Wednesday 24 March at 2pm. Organised with the kind support of Birmingham Women's Hospital, its aim is to improve confidence of the vaccine among health care, care home and social care workers who have worries about fertility, pregnancy or breastfeeding.
To secure your place, visit: <https://cutt.ly/KzMQF4w>

You may have heard information on the news about concerns in Europe about the Astra Zeneca (Oxford) Vaccine. It is important for you to know that The NHS is continuing to administer the AstraZeneca Vaccination as medicines regulators have confirmed that it is safe and that the number of people who develop a blood clot is not higher than we would expect in the general population. Blood clots can occur for many different reasons and there has been nothing to suggest that the vaccine causes increased risk of clots.

About 17 million people in the European Union and the UK have received a dose of the Astra Zeneca vaccine, with less than 40 cases of blood clots reported as of last week. We would expect some people to develop a clot, regardless of having a vaccination and it is very likely this is the case for these 40 people.

The World Health Organization and Europe's medicines regulator say there is no indication of a link between the vaccine and reports of blood clots.

The European Medicines Agency (EMA) - which is currently carrying out a review into the incidence of blood clots - said the vaccine could continue to be administered. It said the incidence of clotting in vaccinated people was "no higher than the number seen in the general population". In addition, The UK medicines regulator has also confirmed that evidence "does not suggest" the jab causes clots, as it urged people in the country to get the vaccine when asked to do so.

These pauses for the AstraZeneca vaccine in some European countries are not because it is unsafe to give. It's to allow time for experts to explore why a very small number of people who were recently given the shot also developed blood clots. When an illness occurs shortly after vaccination, it is right to question whether the shot might have contributed in any way. There is no indication or evidence, however, that the vaccine was linked or responsible and the figures are not higher than the number of blood clots you would expect to occur in the general population

If you are ready to book your vaccine appointment please use the National Booking System by visiting www.nhs.uk/covid-vaccination and select Social Care Worker or ring 119 if you can't book online. If you have had your first vaccine, please be aware that both doses are needed to be effective. Please do not stop any of the precautions that you have been taking in your workplace and out in the community such as wearing a face mask, social distancing, and increased regular hand hygiene.

Yours sincerely



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