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New Year Planning

We are finally into 2021 and it's already a bumpy ride for Primary Care. However, to help you plan ahead, we have produced a [Good Governance 2021 Wall Planner](#) to support you in assessing risks and any peaks in workload, aiding you in delegating tasks to ensure that you remain on track and compliant. Use it to showcase that an effective assurance and auditing process is being followed and that your service is well-led.

Primary Care COVID-19 Vaccination Programme

As the COVID-19 vaccination programme continues, and we now have two vaccines available (Pfizer/BioNTech and Oxford/AstraZeneca), the situation is changing rapidly.

Guidance and resources are available on the [NHS England website](#) and also on the [FutureNHS Collaboration Platform](#) but here is an update on the current situation:

- Priority Cohorts for Vaccination
 - Priority is still care home residents and staff and those aged 80 and over, but now that the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine is available, your housebound patients can now be vaccinated
 - Priority is for older age care homes, but a younger resident with a learning disability in an older age care home should be vaccinated at the same time as the rest of that care home
 - All health and social care workers (including those in community pharmacy, dentistry, optometry locums, returners, etc.) can be given the vaccine. Further information about how to vaccinate these groups will be published this week
 - People who are unable to have the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine due to severe allergies, can be offered the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine if necessary
- Vaccinating in an Outbreak
 - If an outbreak occurs, discuss with local Public Health about continuing the vaccination programme to prevent further outbreaks
- Shielding Advice
 - During this third national lockdown, the shielding advice for those who are Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV) is similar to the advice in the previous lockdowns

- Prioritisation of Services
 - There will be updated advice and guidance to support primary care to prioritise care, including what activity can be safely stopped or paused
 - The RCGP and BMA are also planning to issue formal guidance which will be available shortly
- Timing of the Second Dose
 - In order to offer a vaccine to more people in the priority JCVI cohorts, the second dose will be given 3-12 weeks after the first dose of the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine and from 4-12 weeks after the first dose of the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine
 - New leaflets have been updated to reflect the changes in the second dose schedule, as well as advice around pregnancy and breastfeeding
- Funding
 - To recognise that a delayed second dose will also delay payment to an unreasonable extent, the Enhanced Service will be amended to make payment for each dose
 - Payment will be made from February for first doses already given in December and January
- Workforce
 - Where lack of available workforce is an issue, sites can include community service staff to support the existing workforce
- PGD and National Protocol
 - A PGD and National Protocol will be available next week
 - The template PSD is on the FutureNHS website for those vaccinating in care homes from this week
- National Booking Service
 - This is due to launch imminently to support the large vaccination centres and community pharmacy sites
- Site Delivery
 - Single site delivery of the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine will be available as soon as possible for some Practices to be available to deliver the vaccine; it is currently subject to MHRA regulations
 - It is currently a 'push' model for vaccine deliveries but hopefully it will be possible to move to a 'pull' model very soon with automatic ordering
- Lateral Flow Testing Shortages
 - Contact the local CCG if there is a shortage of lateral flow testing, or even ask local care homes who have a supply

We have produced a useful COVID-19 Vaccination Information guide in the QCS Resource Centre which also includes some mythbusters.

GP Appraisals

GP Appraisals have been suspended already but guidance will be issued soon, recognising the difficulties right now.

CQC Inspections

The CQC will be posting updated guidance this week which will confirm that all inspection activity will only be in response to significant risk and when they cannot get assurance from other routes. If they do need to inspect, they will carry out an offsite inspection and only make telephone contact through the monitor approach to seek assurances and minimise the need to inspect.