

Stakeholders Briefing

From: Cllr Amanda Hopgood (amanda.hopgood@durham.gov.uk)

Date: Friday, 25 June 2021, 15:00 BST



Our current seven-day infection rate to 19 June stands at 218.8 cases per 100,000, which is above the England average of 105.2 per 100,000. Although this is a steep rise in infection rates this has not led to a significant increase in hospital admissions. Currently we have 13 Covid-19 inpatients across County Durham and Darlington. Over 78 per cent of our eligible population aged 16+ have now received their first dose; over 60 per cent have received their second dose; and 22 per cent are not yet vaccinated. You can find all the latest data for County Durham and your local area on our [Covid dashboard](#).

Infection rates and outbreak control

We are continuing to work on the outbreak in the Durham City area. The outbreak is occurring in an identified cohort of 19-24 year-olds and we are working with our partners and stakeholders to target our resources at emphasising key public health messages. We have moved an additional mobile PCR testing site to Durham to compliment the two existing PCR sites to provide enhance testing. We have asked all university students to undertake a weekly PCR test in addition to the two LFD tests they currently

undertake until the end of the academic year. Any close contacts identified to a positive case within a school are also asked to take a PCR test.

These are only two of the measures we have implemented in response to the rising cases in Durham and more details can be found in the press release we issued on 18 June

www.durham.gov.uk/article/25740/-Play-your-part-plea-as-partners-respond-to-rise-in-Covid-cases-in-Durham-City

We have like the rest of the country seen an increase in cases in schools. As of Thursday afternoon we had 20 schools and other education settings with five or more cases. In total three schools and a nursery have taken the decision to close and we are working with all 20 of these sites along with Public Health England to offer advice and support on infection control, and to increase access to testing. These 20 schools make up a small proportion of the 266 schools we have in County Durham and the vast majority are managing well with no concerns reported.

Vaccinations

In terms of increased vaccine capacity, additional vaccine clinics have been established and the CCG has been able to source additional supplies from central government and pop up vaccine events are planned in Durham City on Saturday 26 June and Sunday 27 June.

The Government has reduced the age limits for vaccination to 18 and to meet increased demand “pop up” vaccination centres are being established in Durham City and Shildon. The Melissa bus continues to visit communities with relatively low vaccine take up and in one day last week over 800 people were vaccinated on the bus. County Durham Care Partnership is working with Durham University and GPs in Durham to vaccinate students in line with recently published Government guidance. The care partnership is working with learning disabilities and carers groups to promote vaccination and planning

for “booster” doses to be given in the Autumn and to co-ordinate this with flu vaccinations. They are on target to offer vaccination appointments to all adults by the end of July.

Adult social care

We have had a number of queries this week from care homes following the Government proposal to make COVID-19 vaccinations compulsory in the sector. While we are pleased that vaccine take up among care home staff remains high in County Durham and the wider North East, we recognise that some providers may require support with implementation and our Commissioning and Public Health teams are assisting with planning for this.

Other news

Aycliffe Secure Children's Home, in Newton Aycliffe, has retained its 'Outstanding' status following a recent inspection. In April this year, Ofsted inspectors found that the actions of the home contribute to "significantly improved" outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people, its child-focused staff "go the extra mile", and children are involved in their own care.

We will mark Armed Forces Day 2021 by raising the official armed forces flag at our County Hall Headquarters in Durham on Saturday 26 June. For the second year running, the annual day will be celebrated mainly with virtual events due to the coronavirus pandemic.

We have removed the traffic management systems that were set up in May last year to support the safe reopening of our Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) during the coronavirus pandemic. The measures have been removed from most of the county's HWRCs except at Annfield Plain to support the ongoing works to develop a low carbon site and large-scale solar farm.

I will continue to keep everyone up to date throughout these changing and challenging times. Information is available on the council's website at www.durham.gov.uk and our social media channels www.facebook.com/DurhamCouncil and www.twitter.com/DurhamCouncil.

Cllr Amanda Hopgood

Leader

Durham County Council

For the latest government advice on the coronavirus pandemic, visit (www.gov.uk/coronavirus). Updates on changes that may affect our area can be found at www.durham.gov.uk/coronavirus.

Public Health England communication materials (posters and social media images) are available for all partners and can be accessed at <https://coronavirusresources.phe.gov.uk/>.

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