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Covid in Scotland: 'No plans' for compulsory vaccination

🕒 22 November 2020



| Jeane Freeman says Scotland has a good track record for effective immunisation programmes

Scotland's health secretary has confirmed people will not be forced to take the Covid vaccine but she hopes most Scots will choose to do so.

Jeane Freeman told the BBC that Scotland had a track record of high take-up for immunisation programmes.

But she said there were currently no plans to make having the coronavirus vaccine compulsory.

A public information campaign targeting every home is planned for the new year, she said.

- First vaccine delivery due next month
- When will we be vaccinated?
- Most vulnerable 'could get vaccine by Christmas'

On Sunday a further 844 positive tests were recorded in Scotland. The deaths of seven people who had previously tested positive for Covid were registered since Saturday but it should be noted registration offices may be closed at weekends.

A total of 95 people were in intensive care - down five from the previous day.

Asked about a survey which suggested about a third of the population had reservations about the jabs, Jeane Freeman insisted they would be subject to the same safety checks as any other new vaccine.

She told the Sunday Politics Scotland programme: "We've no plans on making the vaccine compulsory.

"What we have to do is hear what concerns people have about why they would be reluctant to take the vaccine.

"In Scotland we have a very good record of high uptake of vaccines and we've a strong track record of delivering them safely and effectively."

She said the public would be given "maximum information" on the processes that the vaccines being used in Scotland have gone through.

Alongside the government information campaign, the health secretary said those in the "globe-leading scientific and medical community" would also be allaying any concerns the public may have.



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The health secretary said she remained optimistic that frontline health and care staff could receive the first jabs in December.

The government has already said those over the age of 80 will also be prioritised, with the vaccine being rolled out to the bulk of the population early next year.

She said the Pfizer vaccine was likely to be the first one available and 22 freezers have been purchased, ready to to keep it at the extremely low temperatures it requires for storage.

The details of how it will be distributed to vaccination centres will be finalised once more information on the vaccine becomes available, she said.

Ms Freeman **told the Scottish parliament last week** she hoped up to one million Scots could be vaccinated by the end of January, with 320,000 doses estimated to be ready in the first two weeks of December if approvals are given.

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