

Foreword

Foreword from Secretary of State for Health and Social Care and Minister for COVID-19 Vaccine Deployment

Only a few months ago, there were doubts that an effective COVID-19 vaccine would ever be developed – now 5 companies have published positive phase 3 results, 3 vaccines have been authorised for use and over 13 million people across the UK have received the first dose of a vaccine.

Vaccination is the way out of this pandemic, and we are grateful to everyone who has played a part in the vaccine effort, from the scientists and trial volunteers to NHS and care sector staff to volunteer stewards at vaccination sites, for their hard work and dedication to overcoming this virus.

The [UK COVID-19 vaccines delivery plan](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-covid-19-vaccines-delivery-plan) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-covid-19-vaccines-delivery-plan>) published on 11 January provided details about vaccine investment and supply, as well as how vaccination sites will be operated and staffed across the country.

It is fantastic progress that over 13 million people across the UK have already taken up the offer of a vaccine and uptake across cohorts has been strong. We had assumed uptake would be around 75% based on previous vaccination programmes but in fact, so far, over 90% of care home residents and over-75-year-olds in England have chosen to receive their first dose of the vaccine. But we must not be complacent; we know that there is variation in the level of uptake across different geographies and communities and we will not rest until everyone who is eligible is protected.

We need to ensure that everyone feels that the vaccine is for them. For some groups of the population the intention to be vaccinated is lower than others. To make sure all our communities are protected, this Vaccine Uptake Plan sets out our approach to making sure that as many people as possible take up the offer of vaccination. The vaccinations are extremely safe and provide protection both to you and your community.

We urge everyone to take the vaccine when you are invited to receive one. This will save thousands of lives. Thank you for everything you are doing to help us beat coronavirus.

Introduction

The COVID-19 vaccine is the best way to protect us from coronavirus and will save thousands of lives. Three COVID-19 vaccines have now been authorised for use in the UK by the medicines regulator, the Medicines and Healthcare products