

Briefing

22 January 2021

Armed Forces healthcare briefing and latest updates on COVID-19

This fortnightly brief is intended to keep you up-to-date on the provision of NHS services for the Armed Forces community, as well as latest information and guidance relating to COVID-19.

COVID-19 updates

COVID-19 vaccination priority groups

This week the NHS began rolling out vaccines to the next two priority groups, meaning millions of people aged over 70 and those clinically extremely vulnerable can expect to be invited to get their vaccinations.

- This allows the NHS to further accelerate vaccinations of people most at risk.
- Priority remains to vaccinate the top two cohorts first, while over 3.8 million people have received their first vaccine dose in the UK.
- Public Health England's [first phase priority groups](#) poster provides a clear summary.

In England, the vaccine is being offered in some hospitals and pharmacies, at hundreds of local vaccination centres run by GPs and at larger vaccination centres. More centres are opening all the time.

It's being given to:

- people aged 80 and over
- some people aged 70 and over
- some people who are clinically extremely vulnerable
- people who live or work in care homes
- health and social care workers

The order in which people will be offered the vaccine is based on advice from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI). [Read the latest JCVI advice on priority groups for the COVID-19 vaccination on GOV.UK](#)

How you will be contacted for your vaccination

The NHS will contact you when it's your turn to have the coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccination. When it's your turn, you'll be [contacted](#) by letter, text or email with information on how to book your appointment. More people are being offered the vaccine every week.

To stay up to date with the latest news and information on the vaccine, please visit the [NHS website](#). Please see [here](#) for documents relating to the vaccination programme, as well as Public Health England [COVID-19 vaccine campaign resources](#).

Vaccine team roles

There are a number of routes to get involved in either a paid or volunteer capacity. Information is available on the NHS website page '[Join Vaccine Team](#)'.

Coronavirus vaccine scams warning

We are aware that some people are receiving suspicious calls and text messages offering the COVID-19 vaccination.

Coronavirus vaccines are only available on the NHS. You can be contacted by the NHS, your employer, or a GP surgery local to you, to receive your vaccine. Remember, the vaccine is free of charge. At no point will you be asked to pay. The NHS will never:

- ask you for your bank account or card details.
- ask you for your PIN or banking password.
- arrive unannounced at your home to administer the vaccine.
- ask you to prove your identity by sending copies of personal documents such as your passport, driving licence, bills or pay slips.

If you receive a call you believe to be fraudulent, hang up. If you believe you have been the victim of fraud or identity theft you should report this directly to [Action Fraud](#) on 0300 123 2040. Where the victim is vulnerable, and particularly if you are worried that someone has or might come to your house, report it to the Police online or by calling 101.

Care and support for the Armed Forces community

Defence select committee

On 26 January 2021, the second formal meeting of the [Defence Select Committee](#) will revisit its inquiry in the last Parliament into the provision of mental health care for the Armed Forces and veterans to see what progress has been made on its recommendations and how the system has responded to the pandemic. This follows the first formal meeting on 12 January 2021. For a transcript of this session, visit [here](#).

Veterans' Mental Health High Intensity Service (HIS) London launch

On Wednesday 20 January, Camden and Islington NHS Foundation Trust launched the new High Intensity Service (HIS) for veterans in need of urgent mental health care and treatment living in London.

It is integrated within, and builds on, the success of the established London and South East NHS Veterans' Mental Health Transition, Intervention and Liaison Service (TILS) and the Veterans' Mental Health Complex Treatment Service (CTS). HIS is a collaboration with Walking With The Wounded, STOLL and The Ripple Pond.

As part of the London HIS Launch event 'On Parade' released a short video titled "[A Soldiers journey through mental health](#)" made with veteran charities, Walking With The Wounded, STOLL and The Ripple Pond and lived experience experts and their friends and families.

A referral can be made by calling [020 3317 6818](tel:02033176818), or emailing cim-tr.veteranstilservice-LSE@nhs.net. You can [download a referral form](#) or request a hard copy in the post. You can also send a referral to the following address:

The Veterans' Mental Health TIL Service
St Pancras Hospital,
4th Floor, West Wing,
4 St Pancras Way, London.
NW1 0PE

For details of other NHS veterans mental health services in England, visit the [NHS website](#).