

To: All Practices in Surrey and Sussex LMCs

6 October 2021

Dear Colleagues

Covid Vaccination of people working or deployed in care homes.

I am writing to all colleagues to remind them of the Government's decision to require all those working in CQC Registered care homes, including those visiting, or attending care home venues in the course of their work, to be vaccinated. There are some limited exceptions, and exemptions allowable under the NHS Covid19 Pass Exemption Certificate arrangement.

This arrangement comes into effect on 11th November, and full details are available at: -

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) vaccination of people working or deployed in care homes: operational guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-vaccination-of-people-working-or-deployed-in-care-homes)

The last date for care home workers to get their first vaccination, so that they were fully vaccinated by the time these Regulations come into force, was 16th September.

The Regulations state that Care Home Registered Managers must refuse entry to the care home (but not the surrounding outside area) unless a person can demonstrate they have been vaccinated against coronavirus in line with the recommendations in the Green Book. There are exceptions in relation to emergency staff carrying out duties, including healthcare staff, and these rules do not apply to friends, family, and essential carers of residents, or people who are visiting during a residents End-of-Life care. They also not apply to those under the age of 18.

Evidence of vaccination may include the NHS Covid pass on the NHS App, or the Covid Pass letter.

If a care home worker (or other person who would otherwise be affected by these Regulations) requires exemption confirmation, they will need to do so via the Exemption Certification process just announced by NHS England. I have written to all practices about this process. There is a temporary self-declaration exemption process available currently for care home staff which will be available until the end of December 2021.

The introduction of these Regulations is currently being challenged by a Judicial Review, arguing they are disproportionate, do not take into account the efficacy of alternatives to mandatory vaccination, and will lead to shortages of staff in care. The latter is undoubtedly true and the Government itself predicts approximately 7% of care home workers, around 40,000 staff of the current 570,000 workforce, will refuse to have the vaccine. Some of these may have valid

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exemptions, but many will not and may ultimately be dismissed as no alternative role or employment is available.

CQC is responsible for monitoring compliance with this element of the Regulations and have published a statement on their approach available at:

[Statement on COVID-19 vaccination of people working/deployed in care homes: the role of the Care Quality Commission | Care Quality Commission \(cqc.org.uk\)](https://www.cqc.org.uk/publications-and-reports/covid-19/cqc-statement-on-covid-19-vaccination-of-people-working-deployed-in-care-homes-the-role-of-the-care-quality-commission)

GP practices providing NHS or privately retained services to CQC registered Care Homes need to ensure staff can be legally admitted, by demonstrating evidence of vaccination, or evidence of an exemption. This includes both staff visiting to provide patient care, and those who may visit for other roles, such as training. These rules do not apply to NHS staff attending care homes in a private capacity if they would be exempt under the arrangements noted above.

There are currently no firm intentions to extend mandatory Covid19 vaccination to NHS employed or engaged staff.

I hope this update is helpful.

With best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'JP', followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Dr Julius Parker
Chief Executive