

Delivering the COVID-19 vaccination programme across Wales

Introduction

The COVID-19 vaccination programme is the largest scale vaccination campaign in our country's history. Our health service has never mobilised an immunisation programme on this scale – it will be unique in many of our lifetimes – and during the most difficult time in the NHS's history.

Every NHS organisation in Wales has had a huge role to play in the roll-out of the COVID-19 vaccination programme. By working closely with partners, including Local Authorities, the third sector and the military, NHS Wales organisations are delivering vaccines at a pace and scale which has been nothing short of remarkable.

At the time of writing, despite facing many different challenges, the NHS in Wales has delivered over 684,000 first doses of a COVID-19 vaccine. This is equivalent to around 20% of the population.



NHS Wales organisations have moved swiftly to vaccinate people within the top four priority groups laid out by the Joint Committee for Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI). Vaccinations are being provided in a range of different sites, including mass vaccination centres, primary care surgeries, mobile units, care homes and residential settings.

No matter what the challenge, or the healthcare setting, the NHS is delivering for people in Wales and every single person who has received a dose of the vaccine is a step closer to securing safer communities. The roll-out of the vaccine is a priority which will not only protect the public, but also ease the pressure on a stretched and exhausted NHS and social care workforce.

We know there are still some people who feel anxious and worried because they have not been called for their vaccination appointment. We want people in Wales to know there is a plan for them, especially if they have individual needs or are housebound. Over the next few weeks, the NHS in Wales will continue to ensure that nobody is left behind and every adult who wants the vaccine will receive it.

There are many challenges ahead, from future supply of vaccines to providing everyone with a second dose. However, we have made a strong and positive start and we all hope the vaccine will lead to a better and brighter 2021.

**Aneurin Bevan
University
Health Board
(UHB)**

Since the launch of the COVID-19 vaccination programme, staff at Aneurin Bevan UHB have worked tirelessly to ensure those in the top four priority groups identified by the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) have received their vaccination. These groups include care home residents, care home staff, those age 70 years and over, and frontline NHS workers. At the time of writing, the Health Board is delivering the vaccine through GP surgeries and five mass vaccination centres. Staff from all departments have come together to support the effort, both in terms of administering the vaccine itself, to supporting the administrative and logistical challenges that such a large-scale programme demands.

***As of 8th February,
111,443 people have
received the first
dose of the COVID-
19 vaccine in
Aneurin Bevan UHB.***

To support vaccine delivery, the organisation has introduced a mobile COVID-19 vaccination team. Angela (*pictured, right*) is the Operational Manager of this team, which has focused mainly on delivering the COVID-19 vaccine in care homes. Angela usually works as a Clinical Lead in Primary Care and Community Services but was the perfect candidate to switch roles and support the vaccination effort due to her experience in dealing with the Swine Flu pandemic.



Dental assistants have come on board to support the vaccination programme too. June and Angela (*pictured, right*) usually work as part of the Health Board's Design to Smile team but have been supporting the vaccination roll-out since the beginning of the year.



***For more
information about
the vaccination
programme visit the
Health Board
[website](#).***

The Royal Air Force has also provided extensive logistical support to the organisation in delivering the vaccine, particularly at mass vaccination centres. [Here](#), senior aircraftman Jimmy Blay discusses the role he and his colleagues have played in supporting the delivery of the vaccine in Cwmbran.

**Betsi Cadwaladr
University Health
Board (UHB)**

More than 1,000 members of frontline staff at Ysbyty Gwynedd in Bangor received their first dose COVID-19 vaccines during the week of 4th January. This was made possible thanks to the opening of Betsi Cadwaladr UHB's third mass vaccination centre, following similar centres being opened before Christmas in Wrexham Maelor Hospital and Ysbyty Glan Clwyd.

A pharmacy in Llanbedrog became the first in Wales to start vaccinating people against COVID-19 as part of a three-day pilot which began on 15th January. Following the successful pilot, pharmacies have become key players in delivering the vaccination programme across Betsi Cadwaladr UHB, particularly in small, rural areas where the village pharmacy is a key part of ensuring the local community has access to medical treatments.



***As of 7th February,
144,102 people have
received the first dose
of the COVID-19
vaccine in Betsi
Cadwaladr UHB.***

On the weekend of 22nd January, a further three medical practices in the Dwyfor cluster (Ty Doctor, Rhydbach and Treflan) successfully delivered an ambitious programme to deliver over 1,000 Pfizer COVID-19 vaccines. Betsi Cadwaladr UHB staff successfully contacted and booked-in more than 1,000 people across the Health Board area in just two days. The Highways Department at Cyngor Gwynedd Council also supported the effort by delivering and setting out more than 150 traffic cones and some patients were ferried to vaccination centres by Llyn Coastal Bus. When snow and icy conditions arrived at the weekend, Cyngor Gwynedd Council swiftly deployed a number of gritters to clear the main roads around the medical centres and ensure access was maintained – an effort that was supported by North Wales Police. Thanks to a well co-ordinated and collective effort, all 1,000 Pfizer vaccines were successfully delivered before the end of the weekend.



***For more information
about the vaccination
programme visit the
Health Board [website](#).***

Cardiff and Vale University Health Board (UHB)

Staff at Cardiff and Vale UHB have been supporting roll-out of the vaccination programme through a mobile vaccination team. The team's priority in the short-term has been to deliver first dose vaccinations to as many care home residents and staff across the Health Board area.



As of 10th February, over 92,000 people have received the first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine in Cardiff and Vale UHB.

Towerhill Care Home in Penarth became the first care home in the area to have all residents and staff vaccinated. The mobile vaccination team alone delivered first dose vaccines to more than 1,700 care home staff and more than 350 care home residents within weeks of deployment. In total, as of 3rd February, the organisation has delivered first dose vaccinations to over 4,000 care home staff, 1,750 care home residents, nearly 16,000 people aged 80 and over and nearly 21,000 healthcare staff. See [here](#).

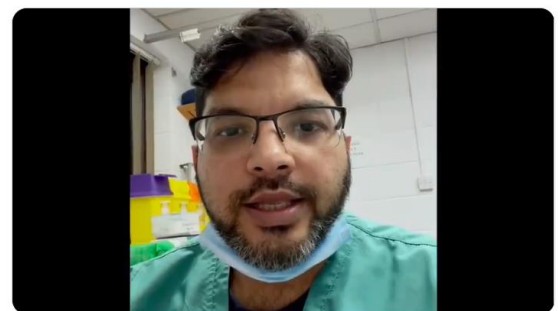
Moreover, as part of a concerted effort to educate, inform and reassure the public about the COVID-19 vaccine in communities where uptake has been lower, Cardiff and Vale UHB has shared videos from staff in minority ethnic groups, explaining the facts about the vaccine. GP Amir Ghanghro recorded a message in Urdu after having his Coronavirus vaccination.

The Health Board has also shared a #COVIDMYTHBUSTER series produced by Muslim Doctors Cymru that aims to debunk myths and quell distrust around the vaccine in some communities. Examples are available to watch [here](#) and [here](#).

For more information about the vaccination programme visit the Health Board [website](#).

Huw Williams
@huw_penylan

Here is our fantastic colleague @GhanghroAmir having his COVID vaccination last week. A message in Urdu for his local community. @CardiffSW



**Cwm Taf
Morgannwg
University
Health Board
(UHB)**

Staff at Cwm Taf Morgannwg UHB responded quickly to roll-out of the vaccination programme, setting up three mass vaccination centres by 18th January in Abercynon, Bridgend and Merthyr Tydfil, with a fourth centre opening the following week in Rhondda. Thanks to the rapid setting up of these centres, over 60,000 people across the Health Board area had received a first dose COVID-19 vaccine by Monday 1st February, with 21,000 of those being administered within one week. The organisation is committed to vaccinating everyone in the top four priority groups identified by the JCVI by mid-February.

***As of 10th February,
93,466 people have
received the first
dose of the COVID-
19 vaccine in Cwm
Taf Morgannwg
UHB.***

The geography of the Health Board meant that snow and icy conditions were a key challenge to keeping up the pace of vaccine delivery, and so to safeguard staff and vulnerable people, two mass vaccination centres were closed on Saturday, 30th January. However, thanks to the collective efforts of Cwm Taf Morgannwg UHB staff and social care teams who braved the icy conditions, vulnerable people across the area continued to receive their first dose vaccines, and by the end of the weekend, all care home residents and staff had received a vaccine.



***For more
information about
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the Health Board
[website.](#)***

Cwm Taf Morgannwg UHB has also produced a short video which provides people with an insight into what to expect when they attend their vaccination appointment. The video is available [here](#).

To support the national roll-out of vaccines, HEIW has created two landing pages on its website for individuals wishing to help and support the vaccination programme. In addition to the information already supplied by individual Health Boards and Trusts via their websites and social media channels, these pages act as a central 'one-stop-shop' page of information and links covering the whole of Wales for returning healthcare professionals and volunteers. As well as being of benefit to individuals searching the internet to support the vaccination effort, the pages have also supported national partners, such as the Welsh Government, to signpost individuals seeking information to one location.

Since its launch on 17th December 2020, the [COVID-19 volunteer vaccination programme - HEIW \(nhs.wales\)](#) has been viewed by nearly 14,000 unique users. The [NHS Wales Covid 19 vaccination team: returning healthcare professionals - HEIW](#) pages, since their launch on 5th January 2021, have been viewed by over 6,000 unique users too.



New online HCSW induction

HEIW has designed an online clinical induction programme that provides resources and training to support NHS Wales organisations in the timely delivery of inductions to new Healthcare Support Workers. This approach reduces the face-to-face component of previous clinical induction delivery to a minimum. Now, only the practical skills elements are delivered in-person, with the required knowledge elements covered in either the e-learning modules or the virtual classroom components. The programme's e-learning and virtual classroom elements, together with supporting delivery documents (including lesson plans & presentations) are hosted on HEIW's 'Y Ty Dysgu' learning platform.

Hywel Dda University Health Board (UHB)

The geography across Hywel Dda UHB meant the snow and icy conditions brought a number of logistical challenges for vaccination teams. Despite the conditions however, the teams at RAF Northolt continued to support the organisation's vaccination teams at the Cardigan vaccination centre.



As of 10th February, 81,562 people have received the first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine in Hywel Dda UHB.

The Health Board has recently highlighted the amazing community response and thanked everyone who is helping to support people to attend their vaccination appointments, including Tuk Tuk Time. Based in Pembrokeshire, Tuk Tuk Time is used more to ferrying newlyweds on their wedding day or giving visitors a tour of the sites, but in recent weeks, the team has helped transport members of the public, free of charge, to their vaccination appointments.



On Wednesday 3rd February, two nurses and a doctor visited Caldey Island to ensure that all eligible monks and residents received their vaccine. This, along with the duo of Haverfordwest Optometrist and Dispensing Optician Andy and Kate joining forces to deliver vaccines, shows the excellent teamwork and adaptability of the Health Board's staff.

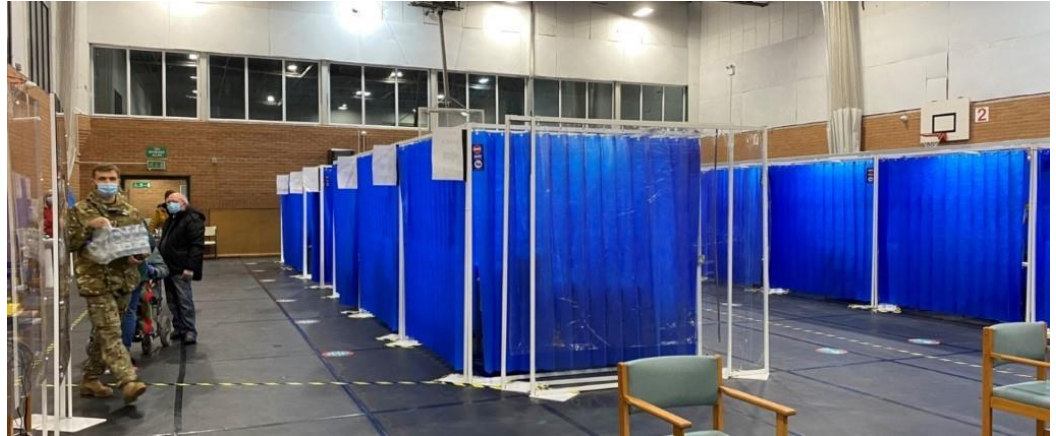


The Health Board has also joined forces with Mid and West Wales Fire Service (MAWWFS) to support those patients who cannot get to Mass Vaccination Centres due to lack of transport. Staff at the MAWWFS have been using their vehicles to transport isolated and vulnerable people to and from their vaccination appointments across the Hywel Dda UHB area. For more information see [here](#).

For more information about the vaccination programme visit the Health Board [website](#).

Powys Teaching Health Board (THB)

More than 300 volunteers have signed up to support the smooth running of Powys' three mass vaccination centres. A total of 180 volunteers are on the rotas to help at the sites in Newtown, Llanellwedd and Bronllys, as the organisation faces up to the biggest public health challenge in a century. The response from volunteers has been so great that a further 132 volunteers are on standby, ready to step up and provide additional support if needed.



As of 8th February, over 33,000 people have received the first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine in Powys Teaching Health Board.

Powys THB has also produced an online form, available via the organisation's website, aimed at those who may know someone over the age of 80 that hasn't yet received notice of a COVID vaccination appointment. The online form means loved ones, friends, carers or relatives of an elderly person can get in touch with the organisation quickly on the elderly person's behalf and make sure that they receive notice of their appointment quickly thereafter. The form is available [here](#).

Furthermore, partnership working between Powys THB and Powys County Council has enabled greater capacity to be achieved in vaccination call centres. The number of staff on-hand to answer any questions about the COVID-19 vaccine in Powys has increased from six to 20 in a matter of weeks.



For more information about the vaccination programme visit the Health Board [website](#).

Ahead of weather warnings and forecasted heavy snow, the Powys THB team made sure they delivered two days' worth of vaccination in a single day so that no vaccine was wasted. See [here](#).

Public Health Wales NHS Trust

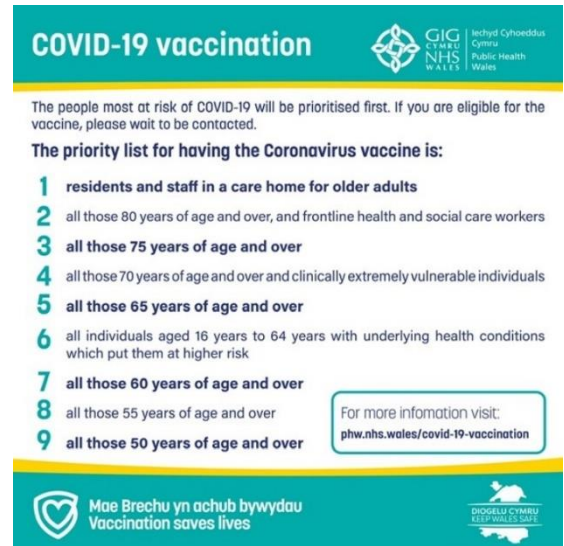
Public Health Wales NHS Trust has supported the COVID-19 vaccination programme in Wales by:


- Providing leadership, expertise and advice to the Welsh Government's Vaccination Programme Board and workstreams;
- Providing information resources for the health and social care workforce; and
- Providing surveillance, training and a Patient Group Direction (PGD) through the Vaccine Preventable Disease Programme (VPDP) to support communication, marketing and publications elements.

In addition, the Public Health Wales Observatory's Evidence Service has produced rapid reviews of evidence on mass vaccination programmes from around the world to inform and support vaccination roll-out in Wales.

While Health Boards are delivering the COVID-19 vaccines on the ground, Public Health Wales NHS Trust is responsible for the surveillance of COVID-19 vaccination uptake. This surveillance is carried out by a specialist team working in the VPDP and Communicable Disease Surveillance Centre. Routine surveillance focuses on the uptake of the COVID-19

vaccination and includes figures specific to the recommended priority groups. Routine surveillance also encompasses the surveillance of equity of uptake by age, sex, geography and level of socio-economic deprivation.





COVID-19 vaccination  Inchyd Cyhoeddus Cymru Public Health Wales

The people most at risk of COVID-19 will be prioritised first. If you are eligible for the vaccine, please wait to be contacted.

The priority list for having the Coronavirus vaccine is:

- 1 residents and staff in a care home for older adults**
- 2 all those 80 years of age and over, and frontline health and social care workers**
- 3 all those 75 years of age and over**
- 4 all those 70 years of age and over and clinically extremely vulnerable individuals**
- 5 all those 65 years of age and over**
- 6 all individuals aged 16 years to 64 years with underlying health conditions which put them at higher risk**
- 7 all those 60 years of age and over**
- 8 all those 55 years of age and over**
- 9 all those 50 years of age and over**

For more information visit:
phw.nhs.wales/covid-19-vaccination

 Mae Brechu yn achub bywydau
Vaccination saves lives 

For more information about the vaccination programme visit the Public Health Wales [website](#).

National figures are published on a daily basis through the Public Health Wales COVID-19 rapid surveillance [dashboard](#). Data for priority groups is included as they become prioritised for vaccination, which from Thursday 21st January, has included care home residents, care home staff, those aged 80 and over and healthcare workers.

The organisation has also developed a microsite to share key messages with the [public](#). The site also includes an area for [professionals](#) involved in the vaccination programme who are not employed by the NHS and cannot access the VPDP intranet page for resources.

Swansea Bay University Health Board (UHB)

Staff at Swansea Bay UHB are delivering the two COVID-19 vaccines in a variety of settings – including GP surgeries, in care homes, in people’s homes and at three mass vaccination centres across the Health Board area. One of the mass vaccination centres, The Orangery in Margam, has been dedicated to vaccinating people over the age of 70, while GP surgeries and mobile vaccination teams focus on vaccinating the over 80s. Since the end of January, staff at The Orangery are regularly delivering over 1,000 vaccines per day.



As of 10th February, 77,107 people have received the first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine in Swansea Bay UHB.

The Margam Vaccination Centre is staffed by Swansea Bay UHB staff, agency nurses, volunteers and 10 RAF personnel who serve with RAF Central Band, RAF Regiment Band and the RAF Salon Orchestra, all of which are London-based. The RAF service men and women helped set up the vaccination centre in less than a day and are currently undertaking non-clinical duties, including greeting patients, booking-in and supporting effective patient flow. There are two vaccination pods within the Orangery which means 20 people can be vaccinated at any one time.

Swansea Bay UHB has also produced an online resource to advise people who have previously been shielding about vaccinations and when they can expect to receive notice of their appointment. The resource explains that people living in Swansea and Neath Port Talbot who are considered clinically extremely vulnerable (CEV) and aged up to 74 can expect to receive a vaccination at their local GP surgery. For those in the 75-79 age category however, alternative arrangements have been put in place, which the online resource clearly sets out. The information is available [here](#).

For more information about the vaccination programme visit the Health Board [website](#).

Velindre University NHS Trust

Staff at Velindre University NHS Trust have played a key role in supporting NHS Wales partners to deliver the COVID-19 vaccine. Staff from radiology services, oncology services, palliative care teams and the Welsh Blood Service have received vaccinator training from staff at the Trust which has enabled the organisation to contact those in the highest priority groups and invite them for a vaccine dose at the Cancer Centre. The organisation's Chair, Donna Mead MBE, has also re-trained as an immuniser to support the vaccination roll-out.



Staff at the organisation are also supporting colleagues at Cardiff and Vale UHB by vaccinating frontline healthcare workers and hospice staff in the Cardiff area, as well as Welsh Ambulance Services Trust (WAST) paramedics and St John's Ambulance staff. Army personnel have been supporting colleagues with the distribution challenges too, ensuring vaccines are transported safely and quickly to where they are needed most.

Staff at the Welsh Blood Service, which is part of Velindre University NHS Trust, have also stepped up by supporting the significant administrative and logistical challenges of delivering such a large-scale vaccination programme in rapid time.





You still need to follow the rules, even after your vaccine.
Keep your distance, wash hands regularly, wear a face mask



Mae Brechu yn achub bywydau
Vaccination saves lives

Together we'll keep Wales safe gov.wales/coronavirus



How can the Welsh NHS Confederation help you?

The Welsh NHS Confederation is the only national membership body which represents all the organisations that make up the NHS in Wales: the seven Local Health Boards, the three NHS Trusts and Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW).

If you would like more information on this briefing, please contact Nesta Lloyd – Jones,
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You can visit our website at www.welshconfed.org or follow us on Twitter [@WelshConfed](https://twitter.com/WelshConfed)