



January 2021

Last year, all our lives were turned upside down by COVID-19. However, since the start of December, the NHS Scotland vaccination programme has given us much needed hope.

NHS staff will be working as quickly as they can to roll this vaccine out. The pace that they can deliver this entirely depends on how many vaccines are approved by healthcare regulators, and on how quickly the vaccines can be supplied by their manufacturers.

This means we have to prioritise, starting with those whose lives are most at risk from the virus. To achieve this we are guided by the expert independent Joint Committee on Vaccinations and Immunisations (JCVI), to make sure those most at risk are vaccinated first.

This means that, to begin with we have been vaccinating those in care homes for older adults, both residents and staff, patient-facing health and social care workers, and those over the age of 80.

Once we have completed vaccinating these groups, our NHS will roll out the vaccine to other priority groups. This will include those at additional clinical risk from the virus, unpaid carers and those over 50. We will work through these groups in order of age, with older people vaccinated first.

We know you appreciate that this will take time to deliver. You do not have to do anything – we will contact you to invite you to come forward to be vaccinated. You do not need to get in touch with your GP.

NHS Scotland will only use a vaccine if it meets the required standards of safety and effectiveness. All medicines, including vaccines, are tested for safety and effectiveness before they're allowed to be used. The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) has to assess all the data to ensure a vaccine works, is safe and that all the necessary trials and checks have been completed before it is approved for supply.

We would encourage all those that are eligible to receive a vaccine to do so when you are invited. It is critically important to reduce the risk to you and your loved ones from COVID-19, and we hope those who have been vaccinated will also share their experience with others.

We also want to thank those who are not in the initial priority groups for their patience. We want to get vaccines to everyone as quickly and safely as we can. Our NHS COVID-19 vaccination programme is one of the most complex and challenging logistical operations our NHS has faced.

The launch of NHS Scotland's COVID-19 vaccination programme promises light at the end of the tunnel, but it is important we all remember it is not a quick fix.

Even with a vaccine, Scotland will face some restrictions for the foreseeable future, so we need to continue to stick to the rules for a while longer and follow the FACTS.

This is great news as we head into 2021.

**Fiona McQueen**  
Chief Nursing Officer

**Gregor Smith**  
Interim Chief Medical Officer

**Jason Leitch**  
National Clinical Director



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# KNOW YOUR COVID PROTECTION LEVEL

To stay safe during the pandemic we need the right measures, in the right places, at the right times.

To see the current level in your area and what it means for you, use our simple postcode checker at [gov.scot](https://gov.scot)

Stopping the spread starts with all of us. **#WeAreScotland**



**FACE  
COVERINGS**



**AVOID  
CROWDS**



**CLEAN  
HANDS**



**TWO  
METRES**



**SELF-  
ISOLATE**