

4th August 2021

FAO: Staff and Patients:

Dear Sir / Madam,

Phase 3 of the Coronavirus Vaccination Programme

I am writing to update you on local arrangements for COVID-19 booster ('Phase 3') vaccinations.

We are extremely proud to have led the vaccination campaign for our most vulnerable patients throughout the winter of 2020/21.

We were keen to sign-up to Phase 3 of the vaccination campaign, offering booster vaccinations to all our patients. Despite our best efforts, we have not been able to meet the restrictive contractual requirements necessary to provide an ongoing Local Vaccination Site.

As a group of practices, we have needed to balance the current unprecedented levels of demand for medical care against the potential risks from moving clinicians into the vaccination programme. The Phase 3 specification requires provision of an 8am-8pm vaccination service, seven days per week. We have concerns that this would negatively affect the wellbeing of our already stretched staff, whilst potentially impacting our ability to provide safe and effective patient care.

Unfortunately, the Phase 3 specification does not allow vaccinations to be run from individual practices. Vaccinations must be run from a single nominated site for the whole Primary Care Network. Now that community centres and commercial sites have returned to business as usual, there have been challenges finding a suitable venue for ongoing vaccinations.

Most of our patients will receive appointments through the National Booking Service for COVID-19 booster vaccination at one of the large county or pharmacy sites. You will receive notification when it is your turn to book an appointment.

We have offered to provide vaccinations for patients who are housebound, living in a residential care setting or who are too unwell to travel. We are awaiting further information about this but anticipate we will provide roving vaccination teams and possibly pop-up clinics for these patients. We will keep you informed once arrangements become clearer.

Further information on the Somerset COVID-19 Vaccination Programme can be found at <https://www.somersetccg.nhs.uk/health/local-services/health-services-during-coronavirus/covid-19-vaccinations-in-somerset/>

Please rest assured that we continue to work hard to ensure your safety, health and wellbeing.

Yours sincerely,



Dr T M Quinlan
Clinical Director
General Practitioner