

Mandatory Vaccine Briefing and Checklist

With the remaining restrictions planned on being lifted from July 19th, many Care Managers may be thinking about things getting back to normal.

Despite the pace of the vaccine rollout across the UK, there has been a stark rise in the delta variant of the disease. This has led to a 4-week extension in Covid restrictions. While this may be frustrating to some, it does give us time to consider what approaches we need to take once they are lifted.

Additionally, dependent on new Government regulation around mandatory vaccinations, we will have a period of 16 weeks to consider the impact on our services. How can we prepare for the Government's final decision and the end of restrictions? This briefing document hopes to help answer that question.

The Vaccination Gap

Even with the new Government regulation obliging care home staff to have it, it is unlikely that every single person, both staff and residents, will have been vaccinated.

Some people, of course, may refuse the vaccine for health reasons and others for reasons personal to themselves, such as religion or culture. Where this might be residents, care home providers will have to adapt and overcome, as usual. Where it is staff, they will, of course, be able to insist, once the 16-week grace period is over, that those staff do indeed have the vaccine.

But what of those that want to stay but are saying right now that they don't want the vaccine? The Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE) has advised that **“an uptake rate of 80% in staff and 90% in residents in each care home setting would be needed to provide a minimum level of protection against outbreaks of COVID-19”**. (DHSC, Making Vaccination a Condition of Deployment in Older Adult Care Homes). This means a risk assessment based upon numbers vaccinated

compared with this measure from SAGE is still a valid one, enabling care homes to track the risk of the number of vaccinated rises in their service.

Trying to help tip this balance through communication and understanding will be time well-spent. Rather than consider now whether to make a decision in your service to force all eligible staff to have the vaccine or dismiss them, talk to your team about the vaccine first. Get their views on it and ask if they intend to have the vaccine and discuss what it means if they don't. Similarly, ask their opinions on supporting people who have not had the vaccine. There is plenty of time for discussion and persuasion, so don't jump into the decision just yet. You may save yourself a problem further down the road.

The case history, of course, will catch up later, as it would seem almost certain that there will be a rash of unfair dismissal claims from staff who refuse to have the vaccine, but it impacts the care home workforce, in general, should fear the most. Likely, mandatory vaccinations will put some people off coming into or staying in the care sector for their employment. Time will tell. And trying now to make sure good staff stay is again, time well spent.

After Restrictions End

Those services seeking a swift return to the old normal after 19 July should slow down a little and proceed with extreme caution. For now, at least, we do not know if the deadline for the lifting of restrictions will be put back; it is possible, depending upon how many variants of the disease spread.

It seems clear that Risk Assessments for Covid-19 are very likely to become a permanent feature of our standard suite of assessments in the future, so keep them going. Similarly, continue to consider the use of PPE in services beyond the complete lifting of restrictions, particularly for personal care and support of unvaccinated people. PPE is still free to social care services via the Portal until April 2022, making the most of it where you can.

We may have to live with Covid for a very long time , and it will continue to present a risk, albeit a lower one, even if we are all vaccinated.

With all remaining restrictions being lifted from 19 July, many Care Managers may be thinking about things getting back to normal.

Despite the pace of the vaccine rollout across the UK, progress is tempered by the rise in variants of the disease. This has led to a 4 week extension in Covid restrictions. While this may be frustrating to some, it does give us time to consider what approaches we need to take once they are lifted.

Additionally, dependent on new Government regulation around mandatory vaccinations, we will have a period of 16 weeks to consider the impact on our services. How can we prepare for the Government's final decision and for the end of restrictions? This resource hopes to answer that question.

Overall - Proceed with Caution!

The vaccination programme certainly reduces the risks, but it does not eradicate them and continuing infection prevention and control measures where appropriate is strongly advised.

Mandatory Vaccination Checklist

	Mandatory vaccination needs to pass a vote in parliament
	Once mandatory vaccination is confirmed, then 16 week grace period starts
	Update list of non-vaccinated staff and residents
	Run risk assessment as per appendix
	Assess risk in service based on the outcome
	Consider re-deployment or next steps for staff non-compliance
	Prepare to demonstrate compliance of service to the regulator when required

Covid-19 Vaccinations in Services - Risk Assessment

This Risk Assessment relates to the risk presented to services by unvaccinated staff and residents.

Even with the new Government regulation obliging care home staff to have it, it is unlikely that every single person, both staff and residents, will have been vaccinated. Some people, of course, may refuse the vaccine for health reasons and others for reasons personal to themselves.

For now, at least, a service risk assessment based upon the total number of people vaccinated compared with the below measure from the Scientific Advisory Group in Emergencies (SAGE) is still a valid one, enabling care homes to track the risk level as the number of those vaccinated rises in their service.

How to assess your service's risk level

All services should enter the percentage of vaccinated staff in the service's staff team and the percentage of vaccinated clients. The multiplication of the two percentage figures represents the risk. **Higher scores mean less risk.**

The lower the percentage of vaccinated individuals, therefore, the lower the score and the higher the risk.

The upper green banding represents the minimum safe limit set by the Scientific Advisory Group in Emergencies (SAGE), which advises the Government on Covid-19.

SAGE advises: **"an uptake rate of 80% in staff and 90% in residents in each individual care home setting would be needed to provide a minimum level of protection against outbreaks of COVID-19".**

The assessment, therefore, only has three bands – Low, Medium and High risk. The assessment should be reviewed monthly.

Services should seek where they can to maximise the number of individuals with at least one vaccination.

Table: Understanding the risk

What is the risk?	Who is at risk?	What are the existing controls?	Risk Rating
The risk is an outbreak of Covid in the service with the service potentially unable to operate normally	Potentially anyone working in, living in, or entering the service	Implementation of Government advice on the use of PPE/ distancing/ventilation. All staff and residents encouraged to get a vaccine	Based on percentage of vaccinated staff multiplied by the percentage of vaccinated residents (% of vaccinated staff x % of vaccinated residents)

Covid-19 Vaccination Risk Assessment

Name of Service: _____

Date of Assessment: _____

Name and Position of Person carrying out
Assessment: _____

Signature of above person: _____

How many residents live at the service? _____

How many have had at least one vaccine? _____

What is the percentage of residents with at least one vaccine? _____ % (Fig. A)

How many staff work at the service? _____

How many have had at least one vaccine? _____

What is the percentage of staff with at least one vaccine? _____ % (Fig. B)

Risk Score is (Fig. A) X (Fig. B) = _____

See next page for Score Chart

Risk Score		Action
<4800	High	Seek advice and assistance from Public Health, Local Authority and Commissioners to increase number of vaccinated people in the service, Maintain all IPC controls to high level and consider a review of the service's Visiting Policy
4800 - 7200	Medium	Review all current IPC measures and add where necessary, Monitor and increase vaccinations amongst staff and residents where possible
>7200	Low	Maintain all IPC measures and continue to increase numbers of vaccinated people where possible

