

The parish of St Briavels falls within the English county of Gloucestershire in the Forest of Dean District. The local GP provider is The Wye Valley Practice, which comes under the auspices of your Health Board. Through no fault of the practice staff, we feel the provision of this vital vaccination service for our parish is an unacceptable victim of cross-border arrangements.

We wish to point out that England resident patients served by the Welsh arrangements are getting poorer service than their neighbours who are served by the English NHS via the Gloucestershire CCG arrangements. Also, that those England resident patients served by ABUHB have the legal right to be served under English law, policies, and practices. As such, those patients should be able to be vaccinated at Forest of Dean hubs, and we feel that ABUHB should have a duty to ensure that option is available.

We understand that our parishioners will be invited to attend central mass vaccination hubs, currently in Cwmbran and Newport under the ABUHB governance. Not only are there evident delays in our highest priority groups being made aware of this and being invited to attend, the difficulties regarding distance, practical transport, and physical and mental considerations for those that are the most vulnerable in our community, make this a difficult choice.

The vaccination provision in the rest of the Forest has been a GP-led campaign commissioned by Glos CCG to Practices in the Forest registered with Glos CCG, so they manage the invitations and bookings to a central mass vaccination hub in the Cinderford Dockham Road Practice (a much closer proximity for our residents). We understand this has gone well.

We contacted the Wye Valley Practice to see if we could support in any way and know they have raised with ABUHB on behalf of patients, concerns about communication, invites, transport, access and convenience of the Mass Vaccination Centre. From the information supplied, we also fully appreciate the logistical challenge of both supply and appropriate delivery venues.

We strongly feel that ABUHB must review this situation which is to the detriment of our most vulnerable parishioners during an unprecedented time of anxiety and mental stress for them. We urge you to liaise and make appropriate arrangements with the Glos CCG to enable St Briavels parishioners or any England resident patients registered at the Wye Valley Practice to be offered vaccination using Glos CCG facilitation.

The Health Board is committed to rolling out the programme as quickly and safely as possible in line with vaccine supply and has a blended model of delivery involving mass vaccination centres and GP Practices.

The Health Boards approach to vaccinating housebound residents is to use mobile teams from the Mass Vaccination Programme and District Nurses where GPs identify housebound residents and either those receiving District Nursing services receive the vaccine by the District Nurse or where residents do not receive District Nurse care then the Mass Vaccination Clinic Nurses vaccinate those residents.

With regard to English resident patients served by the Welsh arrangements, please see the following link for definitive guidance:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/wp-content/uploads/sites/52/2021/02/C1145-Position-statement-vaccinating-people-registered-with-a-GP-in-Wales-in-COVID-19-vaccination-sites-in-Eng.pdf>

The Health Board has 5 mass vaccination centres, one in each local authority area. We also have 72 GP Practices across the Health Board area that have started to vaccinate its residents. Age based programmes are usually easier to implement and therefore achieve higher vaccine uptake and are also likely to increase uptake in those with clinical risk factors as the prevalence of these increases with age.

The vaccine supplies we receive each week determines the appointment locations we are able to offer, for example the Pfizer BioNTech vaccine can only be administered at our mass vaccination centres while the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine can also be offered in Primary Care. We are doing what we can to offer appointments quickly and as close to home as possible, however unfortunately due to the logistics of vaccine supplies some people may be asked to travel further. We do ask those who receive an appointment to make every effort to attend as we will not be able to quickly offer an alternative, due to the sheer numbers involved.

As the supply of suitable vaccine allows, we will maximise delivery through that route in order to reduce the number of patients required to travel greater distances.

The Health Board publishes weekly newsletters to keep people updated with the roll-out of the programme which is progressing quickly, and you may like to share these with your constituents for the latest information:

<https://abuhb.nhs.wales/coronavirus/covid-19-vaccine/>

For Frequently Asked Questions: Please visit the [Public Health Wales](#) website for further information on the Covid-19 Vaccination and a full list of frequently asked questions.