

Health and care news from across north east London

Welcome to our public bulletin (also available on our [website](#)) keeping local people informed about health and care services; and how you can stay well and keep safe.

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Think you could help deliver the Covid-19 vaccine?

Now is your chance to be part of history for people in north east London – by applying for one of a range of new clinical and administrative roles.

You could be a vaccinator, administrator or even offer reassurance as a ‘front of house’ friendly face for people coming to be vaccinated. Click [here](#) to find details of all the Covid-19 roles across north east London.

Covid-19 vaccination update

The largest vaccination programme ever is now underway, with people aged over 80, frontline health and social care workers, care home residents and staff first to be vaccinated.

When the time is right for you to be vaccinated, you will receive an invitation either by phone or a letter from your GP or the national booking team. Please DO NOT contact the NHS for a Covid-19 vaccine – we will be in touch as soon as possible. Calling or emailing your GP asking when you will be contacted will affect our ability to successfully deliver the most vaccines to local people.

A range of information including patient information leaflets, guidance and [frequently asked questions](#) about the vaccine is available on [our website](#), and videos explaining the vaccine in Sylheti, Gujarati, Tamil, Urdu and Punjabi are also available to share [here](#). This page is updated regularly.

The [NHS website](#) has more information. The British Islamic Medical Association has produced a helpful [guide for the Muslim community](#). Also, see the [government information guides](#) on the vaccine, which include advice and guidance for specific groups and what to expect when it’s your time to be vaccinated.

About East London Health and Care Partnership (ELHCP)

ELHCP is made up clinical commissioning groups (CCG), provider trusts, councils and local communities working together across north east London to improve health and care services.

North east London covers: City and Hackney, Newham, Tower Hamlets, Waltham Forest, Barking and Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge. For information, contact NEL communications on 020 3688 1216 or thccg.nelcommunications@nhs.net

Across north east London, around a third of eligible people aged 80 and over were given their first vaccination before Christmas. Hospital vaccination hubs are also opening and will be vaccinating frontline staff including those in care homes, hospices and community services.

The vaccine is given in two doses. The first dose gives limited protection in the first 10 days, and increases to very good protection by day 21. It's important the first dose is given to as many people as possible as soon as possible, so the [UK chief medical officers have stated](#) that giving the first dose to as many eligible people as possible should take priority over delivery of a second vaccine dose.

Two types of vaccine have been approved as safe and effective by the official UK medicines regulator.

- For the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine, more information is available [here](#).
- For the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine, more information is available [here](#).

How you can get a Covid test

Covid-19 is still a very real threat and we are all at risk. To find out how you can get tested see [the ELHCP website](#), which also has an interactive [map of local testing centres](#).

The NHS is under huge pressure and it is vital we do all we can to limit the spread of coronavirus. This includes getting tested as well as following the government advice – [‘Hands. Face. Space’](#). Stay up to date with the latest public health advice for you and your family [here](#).



More GP appointments for your urgent health need

Your GP practice is open as usual for telephone, online, video and face-to-face appointments. In fact, GPs are providing more appointments, including in the evening and at weekends, for patients with urgent health needs. Watch this [short animated video](#) on how to contact your GP, the different ways you may be cared for and how face-to-face appointments have changed with Covid.

Ask your pharmacist

Your [pharmacist](#) can help with advice and over-the-counter medicines for common conditions and minor illnesses such as colds, sore throats, aches and pains. They will also tell you if you need to see a GP, nurse or other healthcare professional, or to call NHS 111. If you have a minor illness, your GP can also refer you for a same-day consultation with a community pharmacist, via the new NHS Community Pharmacist Consultation Service.

NHS 111

You can contact NHS 111, day or night. If you need urgent (but not life-threatening) care you should contact [NHS 111](#) before going to Accident & Emergency. NHS 111 can book an appointment for you at a nearby emergency department if needed.

Mental health support

If the Covid-19 pandemic is having an impact on your mental wellbeing, you are not alone.

The pandemic is affecting how we all live our lives, but NHS talking therapy services are here to help.

NELFT provides community and mental health services in Barking and Dagenham, Havering, Redbridge and Waltham Forest. For self-referral call 0300 300 1554 or visit the **[NELFT talking therapies website](#)**. You can also call Mental Health Direct for urgent help and advice any time of the day or night on 0300 555 1000.

East London NHS Foundation Trust (**ELFT**) also provides community and mental health services. Mental health services are available by calling 020 8432 8020 if you live in City and Hackney; 020 7771 5888 if you live in Newham; or 020 7771 5807 if you live in Tower Hamlets. You can also self-refer via **nhs.uk/talk**.

Your stories

There are so many stories to share from our patients about their experiences of care over the last few months. Here are just a few examples:

- **Going ahead with surgery was a simple choice for us – couple’s kidney transplant during the Covid-19 pandemic**
- **A cancer patient on the importance of receiving treatment during Covid-19**
- **If anyone is anxious about going into hospital, they have no need to be – Ray gives his reassurance after complex surgery at King George Hospital**

If you would like to share your experience, please email **thccg.nelcommunications@nhs.net**

Protect yourself against flu

Thousands of people are hospitalised every year due to flu and this year the twin threats of flu and Covid-19 mean it’s more important than ever you get the flu vaccine. For more information, including who is eligible for the free vaccine, see the **[NHS flu vaccination website](#)**. Also, see our range of community videos on flu and the importance of getting vaccinated:

- **from our Cantonese community**
- **from our Polish community**
- **from our Somali community**
- **from our Bengali community**
- **from our Gujarati community**
- **from our Filipino community**
- **from our Tamil community**
- **from our Hindi community**
- **from Rev. Andrew Letby (The Methodist Church)**
- **from Rev James Olanipekun (Christ Apostolic Church)**
- **from Jas Athwal (Leader of Redbridge Borough Council)**

If you are pregnant, have young children or are living with a long-term health condition, then these recordings of online discussions with local GPs could be for you. These short videos answer questions about the flu vaccine, clarify common myths and provide advice on how you can protect yourself this winter.

- **Flu livestream discussion – long-term health conditions and how to protect yourself from flu**
- **Flu livestream discussion – pregnancy and how to protect you and your baby from flu**
- **Flu Q&A – long term health conditions**