

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.

In this issue

- Reflections on a year of the pandemic
- Information on having the Covid-19 vaccination during Ramadan
- Give blood and help save Covid-19 patients' lives

Vaccination update

Our Covid-19 vaccination programme in north east London has given well over 500,000 vaccinations. Thank you to everyone who has helped us achieve this and to everyone who has come forward to be vaccinated.

All people aged over 50 can now book their vaccination via the [national booking service](#). We continue to follow the [Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation \(JCVI\) guidance](#) on the order in which to vaccinate people. [A map of all the current north east London vaccination centres is available online here](#).

Please visit [our website](#), [frequently asked questions](#) and [videos](#) for all the facts. This week the [Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency \(MHRA\)](#) has said: "It has not been confirmed that the reports of blood clots were caused by the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine. People should still go and get their COVID-19 vaccine when asked to do so."

The European Medicines Agency (EMA) [said it was "safe and effective"](#).

Please continue to follow [all the guidance](#) to control the virus and save lives. NHS services are still under pressure, we need to you to protect yourself, your family, friends and others.

Text invitations to have your vaccination

Nationally, the [NHS is sending text messages](#) to millions of vulnerable people to invite them to book a Covid-19 vaccine appointment. The text will:

- be sent from 'NHSvaccine'
- include a link to <http://nhs.uk>
- give you the option to call 119

You can find out more here: <http://nhs.uk/covid-vaccine-advice>

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 thccg.nelcommunications@nhs.net

Your local GP practice may also send you texts about vaccinations. Remember: The Covid-19 vaccine is free of charge on the NHS. The NHS will never ask for:

- your bank account or card details
- your pin or banking password
- copies of personal documents to prove your identity such as your passport, driving licence, bills or pay slips

If you think you have been a victim of fraud or identify theft, report it to Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040.

Upcoming vaccine information events

The [ELHCP website](#) has details of Covid-19 online information sessions (run by the NHS and partner organisations) for anyone who would like to know more about Covid-19 and the vaccine. There are upcoming events for the Somali community and for pregnant women and women thinking of getting pregnant.

Schools and childcare

Schools returned across England on 8 March. You can find government guidance for parents and carers, students and university students, teachers and educational setting leaders [here](#). This includes information on regular testing that is taking place at school and how to get home test kits. Links to local council information on schools and Covid-19 can be found in our previous [newsletter here](#).

Check before you share

Inaccurate claims can circulate quickly — you can stop the spread of misinformation by checking the accuracy of information before passing it on. [In these videos](#), religious leaders and NHS staff explain how you should check before you share.

Reflections on a year since the start of the pandemic

A minute's silence and a national doorstep vigil will form part of a day of reflection to mark the anniversary of the UK's first Covid lockdown next Tuesday 23 March. There will be a minute's silence at midday to reflect on the last year, the challenges we have faced and remember those we have lost.

Last week [NHS Barts Health](#) passed a milestone on [its journey through the pandemic](#) by recording no new Covid-19 admissions on a single day for the first time in six months. The story of how Barts staff rose to the challenge of the second wave is told in this document: [A Winter Like No Other](#). It is dedicated to the memory of those members of the Barts Health family who lost their lives and serves as a tribute to the care and compassion shown by staff who over this period safely [treated almost 13,000 people for Covid-19](#).

Also last week, on Thursday 11 March [NHS BHRUT](#) hospitals marked the one year anniversary since the first Covid-19 patient died at their hospitals. [You can read here](#) for reflections on the year from their Chief Medical Officer, Magda Smith, who has been at the forefront throughout the pandemic.

Have your Covid-19 vaccine during Ramadan

With Ramadan fast approaching, local GPs are urging Muslims not to delay having their Covid-19 vaccine – first or second dose – during the holy month. The [British Islamic Medical](#)

Association has reviewed the analysis of Islamic scholars and confirmed that having the vaccine does not invalidate the fast. The vaccine does not contain pork or other animal, foetal or alcohol products.

For more information, including for people with conditions like diabetes, visit our NHS CCG websites: [Barking & Dagenham](#), [City & Hackney](#), [Havering](#), [Newham](#), [Redbridge](#), [Tower Hamlets](#) and [Waltham Forest](#).

New emergency care centre at Newham Hospital

A new Day Emergency Care Centre (DECC) has officially been opened to patients at Newham Hospital. **The new centre** will allow a large proportion of adult patients who come to Newham Hospital needing emergency care to be rapidly and safely assessed and treated without having to be admitted to hospital.

Act F.A.S.T. on signs of stroke

Call 999 immediately if you are experiencing, or notice someone experiencing, any single one of the signs of stroke. Think and act F.A.S.T.

- Face - has their face fallen on one side? Can they smile?
- Arms – can they raise both arms and keep them there?
- Speech – is their speech slurred?
- Time - to call 999 if you see any single one of these signs of a stroke

The quicker you act the better the chances. The NHS is here to see you safely.

Get your routine vaccinations

While coronavirus has put limitations on all our lives, it is important that you or your baby or child still have routine vaccinations. They protect against serious and potentially deadly illnesses and stop outbreaks in the community.

It is safe to go and have your vaccinations – GP practices have measures in place to minimise any risk to you and your family. If you or your child have missed a vaccination appointment because of disruption related to Covid-19, please ring your GP practice to re-book. For details of which vaccinations are given, please visit www.nhs.uk/vaccinations.

Give blood and help save Covid-19 patients' lives

Please [register your interest here in donating blood plasma](#) if you have had coronavirus (either a positive test or symptoms) and are aged over 17. The NHS will contact you with more questions to see whether you can donate.

Blood plasma makes up about half your blood and after a virus it contains antibodies that help fight infection. The NHS is collecting blood plasma for use in scientific research and possible coronavirus treatments. Your body quickly replenishes the antibodies and plasma you donate, so you may be able to give regularly and potentially help more people.

Complete the census

The census is a survey about all the households in England and Wales. The information collected in it is really important to help the NHS and lots of other organisations understand our populations. The next census takes place on Sunday 21 March 2021. Everyone should receive an access code in the post and can [complete it here](#). You must complete it by law.