

Classification: Official

Publications approval reference: C1135

To: Community Pharmacy Contractors and Local Pharmaceutical Committees

CC: ICS leads, Directors of Public Health and Primary Care, Pharmacy Contract Managers

16 February 2021

Dear Community Pharmacy Contractors and Local Pharmaceutical Committees

Further opportunity for community pharmacy to contribute to the COVID-19 vaccination programme

Since we last wrote to Contractors and LPCs in November, at the start of the first site designation process for a COVID-19 Vaccination Service through Community Pharmacy, significant progress has been made. Over 13 million people have already received their first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine with 192 pharmacy-led Local Vaccination Service sites playing an important role in that fantastic effort.

As you are aware NHS England and NHS Improvement ran a designation process for pharmacy contractors to apply to become a pharmacy LVS site at the end of 2020 and we have been working with contractors to successfully set up community pharmacy-led Local Vaccination Services according to local need during the first weeks of 2021.

We are now in a position where we have taken stock of those applications and have assessed where we think we may need more provision from Local Vaccination Services for our population. We are therefore opening the designation process again to all pharmacy contractors on the NHS England pharmaceutical lists who may be able to provide a service where we have identified there is still a need for our local population.

The terms are the same as the current [Local Enhanced Service \(LES\) agreement](#). Contractors must be able to provide at least 1000 vaccines per week and must be able to open 8am to 8pm 7 days a week if this is required. These opening times may not always be required for all sites but will be agreed with your regional team to ensure good patient access. Sunday trading restrictions should not prevent contractors from expressing an interest.

We will also be asking for expressions of interest from contractors who could provide up to 400 vaccines per week. These sites may be considered where a site offering 1000 vaccines per week is unlikely to be viable, or where an additional site would offer significant benefits for specific patient cohorts.

We have published a [list of priority locations](#). It will be updated on Friday 19 February if additional areas are identified. This list may guide your application but expressions of interest from contractors who wish to provide the service from other locations will also be welcomed and will be considered if additional opportunities and system needs are identified. Regional teams are working on a mixed model of COVID-19 vaccination provision and services may be commissioned from a pharmacy contractor or other provider.

You should apply using the online designation form [here](#).

Following submission of these expressions of interest, as before, there will be a designation and assessment process that will provide NHS England and NHS Improvement with a priority list which will be used to make commissioning decisions. You will receive confirmation of receipt but will not be contacted further unless the NHS England and NHS Improvement regional team want to discuss your proposal further. This process will help us to understand potential provision but does not guarantee commissioning of a pharmacy service in any particular area of the country.

We have prepared some [frequently asked questions](#) to support your expression of interest. We are hosting a webinar on **Wednesday 17 February 6.15pm-7.15pm** to support you in this process. To attend, please register via this [link](#).

Additional questions can be directed to england.pccovidvaccine@nhs.net

Next steps

1. If you wish to apply to provide the COVID-19 vaccination LES then you should complete the designation form and submit this to the NHS England and NHS Improvement regional team via the online designation form by **Sun 28 February 2021** to formally express an interest in becoming a designated site. You should only do this if you are confident you can meet the requirements of the service as set out in the LES.

Section 1 requests specific information about contact details, your pharmacy contract, and your proposed site.

Section 2 requests supporting information on how you will meet the specified criteria including planning and co-ordination, site safety and security, space, workforce, patient experience and indicative site costs. We would encourage you

to share as many of your plans as possible, since decisions on commissioning may be made from this initial submission.




Sites expressing an interest in delivering 400 vaccines a week can omit section 2 in the initial application if they wish. The regional team will then request that information from you if required.

NHS England and NHS Improvement will undertake a process to assess the submissions received and will decide whether the site(s) should be designated. Regional teams will consult LPCs on proposed commissioning arrangements. Contractors whose regions are interested in commissioning an LVS from their site(s) will be informed of the outcome by Friday 12 March 2021.

2. We expect that the first sites identified as part of this process will start operating their pharmacy-led Local Vaccination Service during March 2021 or as vaccine supply and system-need permits.

We want to offer our sincerest thanks in anticipation of your support to deliver this programme at a time when demands on pharmacy and the wider health system are significant. We continue to hear that community pharmacy wants to play its part in this hugely important challenge of delivering the vaccination programme and we look forward to supporting you in doing so.

Yours sincerely

		
Emily Lawson NHS Chief Commercial Officer and SRO Vaccine Programme	Ed Waller Director of Primary Care	Dr Keith Ridge CBE Chief Pharmaceutical Officer for England