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**Working with you to make Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent  
the healthiest places to live and work**

**6 April 2021**

## **Together We're Better COVID-19 Stakeholder Update**

On Monday (29 March), the Stay at Home rule set out by government, [changed](#). You can now gather with either two households or up to six people from a mix of households outdoors, and outdoor sports facilities have also reopened for use. However, you must still continue to work from home where possible and minimise the number of journeys you make. You are still encouraged to stay local and holidays abroad will still not be allowed.

The change in restrictions is a reflection of the evidence that COVID-19 doesn't spread as easily outdoors, but it's possible primarily because of the vaccination programme, and the fact that most of us have followed the rules during this third lockdown to keep infection rates down. Thank you for playing your part in keeping us all as safe as possible, despite the difficulties.

It's great that things are getting a bit closer to normal and it's great that, as a country, we are making progress. However, please keep staying safe while you have your friends in your garden, please keep wearing your face covering when you can't social distance, and of course, keep washing your hands. Remember hands, face, fresh air. There is still the need for social distancing, testing and self-isolating and everyone should do their utmost to adhere to the latest government guidelines.

We understand that many people feel relieved and excited to receive their vaccines and when they hear about friends and family members getting vaccinated. After a long and difficult winter, it may feel like life is finally starting to become normal again. However, while we continue to work through the [priority lists](#) for vaccination – with the goal of offering a vaccine to all adults in the UK by the end of July – even if you have had one or both of your vaccinations - we all still need to follow public health advice. Vaccines are just one element of a return to normal, neither vaccines nor testing are a silver bullet and all our protective behaviours remain as important as ever. Whether or not you've had the vaccine, you could still catch the virus and you could still spread it to those around you. So please,

be vigilant at all times.

The Prime Minister has confirmed that from Monday 12 April, the country will move into Step Two of the Government's roadmap out of lockdown. This means that non-essential shops, gyms, holiday campsites and personal care services like hairdressers will reopen. Beer gardens and outdoor hospitality will also be allowed to open.

The Prime Minister also encouraged the public to use free twice weekly NHS tests which will be [available](#) for everyone from Friday 9 April, including for those without COVID-19 symptoms.

The 'unlocking' dates set out by our government are not set in stone. In order to achieve them, we all need to keep going. To keep doing our part to drive down infection rates and to really make a difference – even at an individual level. You might have seen the new adverts on the television or on bus stops, describing how every hand washed, every step to the side to keep a distance, and so on can make a real difference. These little things can and will make a difference if we all continue to do our bit.

You can read more local COVID-19 news in the [COVID-19 vaccination bulletin](#).

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## Other news...

### **ICS Board Meeting In Public – get involved!**

The next Together We're Better ICS Board meeting in public will take place on 15 April 2021 from 2pm until 4pm. On the day, you will be able to access a link to watch the live, virtual meeting, [here](#). Please note the link won't be live until the meeting begins, so please don't worry if you can't see anything before 2pm if you've clicked the link.

We're also excited to announce that, for the first time ever, we will be asking members of the public to send in questions to be addressed by the Board, relating to the agenda at this meeting. Information about how you can send in questions will be available via the above link in the coming days.

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### **MPFT team calling on young service users to help design new logo in celebration of World Autism Awareness Week**

An MPFT service supporting children and young people with autism in South Staffordshire is calling on their creative skills to help design its new logo. The competition has been launched to celebrate this year's World Autism Awareness Week, which runs from 29 March until 4 April. Open to children and young people with autism in the south of the county, the winning design will be chosen as the team's new emblem going forwards. The deadline to get entries in is 1 May and for more information on how to get involved visit the service's web page at [www.mpft.nhs.uk/services/children-and-young-people-autism-service](http://www.mpft.nhs.uk/services/children-and-young-people-autism-service).

Alongside the logo competition aimed at young service users, the service is also seeking greater parent involvement into how it is run and is currently working with a local parent to provide 'expert by experience' training to staff to enhance learning on both sides. This complements the team's Talking Together for Change programme, which is inviting parents and carers to participate in further developing the service through a series of online

events, starting in April. More information about the programme can be found via the [service's web page](#).

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## Stop Smoking

Smoking in pregnancy decreases the amount of oxygen getting to your baby, and increases the risk of tragic events including miscarriage, stillbirth and cot death.

Quitting smoking is the most important thing you can do to give your baby the best start in life.

Evidence proves that by accessing a stop smoking service (where you will receive 12 weeks of support and nicotine replacement therapies) you are more likely to quit successfully.

Details of how to get free help and support to stop smoking can be found on the attached posters below:

[Smokefree Stoke poster](#)

[Staffs Stop smoking maternity poster](#)

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## Useful Resources...

The Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) has released a new [poster](#) and a film– narrated by GP Dr Hilary Jones MBE – which reminds the public that they must stay outside when meeting others.

New easy read resources:

- [Covid Vaccine film](#) (produced with Skills for People and Learning Disability England)
- [Easy Read: Covid vaccination \(PHE\)](#)
- [Easy Read: What to expect after the vaccine? \(PHE\)](#)
- [Easy Read: Adult consent form \(PHE\)](#)
- [Easy Read: How to test yourself for Covid-19 before you go to hospital](#)
- [Easy Read: How to test yourself for Covid-19 at home](#)
- [NHS easy read Covid vaccination frequently answered questions](#)

### **New social media campaign to target false vaccine information:**

The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) has [launched a new social media campaign](#) to tackle false vaccine information online. A [toolkit](#) with content designed to be shared via Whatsapp and Facebook community groups, as well as Twitter, Youtube and Instagram, to tackle false information has also been created.

Further social media materials to support the recently announced 'roadmap' for exiting the COVID restrictions have been released, which include:

- [Posters and information](#) about surge testing, workplace testing, details of UK ports

of entry and exit, plus information for university students; A range of assets to target key behaviours and to promote the core message 'Hands. Face. Space' can be downloaded from the [PHE Campaign Resource Centre](#).

### Campaign materials added to the Campaign Resource Centre:

- [New 'Hands. Face. Space. Fresh Air' Assets](#) including: [Social Animations](#)
- [New Road Map Assets](#) including [social media statics](#)
- New resources for [Passover](#)
- [Back to School and Vaccine Coronavirus Resources](#)
- [Workplace Testing](#) including marketing assets for [local authorities](#) to engage with local businesses and [employers](#), as well as [private and public businesses and employers](#) to engage their employees
- [Symptoms and Isolation](#) – New assets to encourage symptomatic testing

### British Sign Language resources:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-vaccination-british-sign-language-resources>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/covid-19-vaccination-programme>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/covid-19-vaccination-programme#leaflets,-posters-and-resources>

### Other COVID-19 resources:

- Public Health England (PHE) [guidance](#) for everyone to help reduce the risk of catching COVID-19 and passing it on to others.
- [Fraud social media](#) and [explainer videos](#)
- [COVID-19 vaccine](#)
- [A guide to your COVID-19 vaccination easy read document](#)
- [NHS COVID-19 App resources](#)
- [Wearing a face mask – translations](#) (Arabic/French/Kurdish/Lithuanian/Pashto/Polish/Portuguese/Romanian/Russian/Spanish/Tigrinya)
- [Test and Trace materials](#) are available to use on the Public Health England Campaign Resource Centre. This includes BSL, easy read and large print formats [here](#).
- [Signposting materials](#) with useful information on how people can contact their GP, order repeat prescriptions and manage wellbeing and existing conditions at home: <https://coronavirusresources.phe.gov.uk/nhs-resources-facilities/resources/health-at-home/>
- [Public Health England guide on how older adults can stay active at home during COVID-19 to maintain strength and balance](#)
- [Translated information leaflets for parents with new-borns during COVID-19](#)

- [Mental wellbeing whilst staying at home](#)
- [North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare NHS Trust mental health support and advice guide](#)
- [Guidance on shielding](#)
- [Blood donation materials](#) Public Health England has updated its COVID-19 guidance in light of changes to the government's advice and continue to ensure guidance for the public is timely and up to date. All guidance for members of the public, as well as for people in clinical and non-clinical settings, is published and updated regularly on the GOV.UK collection page.

For the latest information on COVID-19, please visit the [NHS](#) and [government](#) websites.

**Together We're Better** is the health and care partnership for Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent.

NHS Midlands and Lancashire Commissioning Support Unit's (MLCSU) Communications and Engagement Team is now working with Together We're Better to produce and distribute this newsletter. Contact details held by the Together We're Better partnership are now maintained by MLCSU in order to deliver this newsletter.

If you no longer wish to receive this news update [you can unsubscribe or update your preferences here](#)

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