



Weekly Covid Vaccine Newsletter from Swansea Bay University Health Board

Date: April 14th, 2021 (Please note: This newsletter is now issued every Wednesday.)

Edition number: 14

Introduction:

Welcome to the latest edition of our weekly newsletter, 14th of April 2021, which brings you up to date with where we are with the roll out of the Covid vaccines across Swansea and Neath Port Talbot.

This afternoon we gave the 200,000th first dose of the Covid vaccine in our health board area. It's a phenomenal achievement for a programme which has been running for less than six months. To help everyone understand how large a group that is, we have put together a few handy comparisons.

200,000 people is equivalent to:

- Filling the Liberty Stadium almost 10 times
- 50 times the workforce at Port Talbot steelworks
- Filling the new Swansea Arena 57 times
- And filling all the beds in Morriston Hospital 250 times.

The other major development since our last newsletter has been the creation of a **vaccination reserve list** which anyone aged 18 or over who **hasn't yet had their first dose and can attend at short notice** can join. This is to use up any spare doses of vaccine at the end of clinics.

We acted following numerous requests from the community and it's proved extremely popular, with almost 14,000 people now signed up. The booking team has contacted more than 1,000 of these already.

[Go to this page on our website to access the reserve list application form.](#)

That's a great overview of where we are. But there's plenty more to update you with, so let's get cracking.

Latest figures

Please note: Figures correct as of 4.30pm on Wednesday, April 14th, 2021. These figures are for the Swansea Bay University Health Board area, not the whole of Wales.

1st dose: **200,705**

2nd dose: **66,945**

Running total (1st and 2nd doses): **267,650**

Latest news

Ramadan We wish Ramadan Mubarak to our Muslim readers as the month of fasting begins. We'd also like to remind you that Islamic scholars have confirmed that having the vaccine does not break fast as it's not nutrition, so there's no need to delay your appointment. Also, the vaccine does not contain any animal or foetal products.

And if you do experience side effects which require painkillers, the advice from scholars is that you are allowed to break fast to take medication regardless of the cause.

[The British Islamic Medical Association website has more details, including advice on what to do if you experience side effects following vaccination that leave you feeling unwell.](#)

[Go to Twitter to watch a helpful video message from Islamic organisations, including the Muslim Council of Wales.](#)

[More advice on the Covid vaccine for black, Asian and minority ethnic communities can also be found on this dedicated page on our health board website.](#)

Prioritisation for over 16s living with adults who are immunosuppressed If you are 16 or over and live with an adult with a severely weakened immune system, you will now be prioritised for vaccination. The Welsh Government has taken the decision following advice from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) Arrangements are being made to invite you and full details will follow.

Immunosuppressed adults should have been vaccinated already but, if you or a loved one are in this category and haven't yet had the first dose, please contact our booking team by email: sbu.covidbookingteam@wales.nhs.uk

The JCVI does not currently advise vaccination of household contacts of immunosuppressed children, or children who are household contacts of immunosuppressed adults.

Pregnant and wondering about the Covid vaccine? Pregnant women at higher risk of catching Covid and becoming seriously unwell may be eligible for the vaccination.

If you have underlying health conditions, including gestational diabetes, other risk factors such as your age or weight or you are a frontline health or social care worker, please contact your midwife or consultant to find out if vaccination is right for you. If you are under the care of a consultant, contact the number or email address on your last letter from the hospital.

If you are under the care of community midwives, here is a list of the teams' contact details:

- | | | |
|---------|--|-------------|
| • North | SBU.NorthMidwives@wales.nhs.uk | 07766466892 |
| • South | SBU.southmidwives@wales.nhs.uk | 07766466891 |
| • East | SBU.EastMidwives@wales.nhs.uk | 07971719632 |
| • West | SBU.WestMidwives@wales.nhs.uk | 07766466893 |
| • Afan | SBU.afanmidwives@wales.nhs.uk | 07581569882 |
| • Nedd | SBU.NorthMidwives@wales.nhs.uk | 07815779113 |

Housebound and not yet vaccinated We have been collecting the details of those who are housebound and are still to be vaccinated, which includes some people in group 6, and will be making sure that a vaccinator visits them by the end of the month.

Second doses – a reminder You will automatically be recalled for your second dose of the Pfizer or AstraZeneca vaccine around 12 weeks after the first. There's no need to join the reserve list.

If you had your first dose in your GP surgery, you will hear from them and return there.

If you were vaccinated in a Mass Vaccination Centre, the Immbulance or a pharmacy, you will be recalled by the health board. We'll do our best to give you your second dose in the same venue, but this may not be possible.

Second doses timetable - From 19th April, anyone aged 70-74 who was vaccinated with the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine at either Margam or Gorseinon will start to receive their 2nd dose in line with guidance which is to offer a 2nd dose of that vaccine up to 12 weeks after the first dose.

GP practices will complete most of their 2nd doses for those aged over 80; living in care homes or Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (shielded) over the next 3 weeks.

Take up rates While missed vaccination appointments may make the headlines, they make up a very small proportion of overall appointments.

Our own data, which may differ from Welsh Government figures due to a reporting delay, shows that take up rates for the vaccine are excellent across priority groups 1-9, with 90% of people in groups 1-9 overall across the Swansea and Neath Port

Talbot areas having received their first dose. This includes people over 50, those with underlying health conditions and frontline health and social care workers.

If we drill down further into the categories, we see that across Swansea and Neath Port Talbot 98% of care home residents have had their first dose and 84% have had their second so far and 95% of over 80s have had their first dose with 60% having their second dose so far.

Other priority groups also have first dose take up rates of over 90%.

But we are not complacent. We know that certain areas of our towns have lower take up rates than we'd like and we will be doing some work to find out why and how we can help combat it.

We'd also welcome your help with this so feel free to email SBU.TeamSwanseaBay@wales.nhs.uk with any insights and ideas.

Blood clots We are following the new guidance which states that those aged 18 to 29 should be offered an alternative vaccine to the Oxford-AstraZeneca. Welsh Government has confirmed that we will have sufficient vaccine to enable us to do this and at the moment this is likely to be Pfizer vaccine within Swansea Bay University Health Board.

The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency said there is an extremely small risk of developing a blood clot following a dose of the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine – about four in one million – and that the benefits of having it still far outweigh any risk for those 30 and over.

Now and next We are pleased to say that we are still making excellent progress in rolling out the vaccine to all adults in Swansea Bay and we remain about 2 weeks ahead of schedule. Our schedule is, of course, dependent on vaccine supply, and we don't have certainty over supplies beyond 2-3 weeks. However, we hope that we can continue to push ahead and continue to vaccinate younger age groups.

At the moment, we are vaccinating those aged 40-49 and are pleased that so many in this age group are coming forward to be vaccinated. We hope that by this time next week, we will have nearly finished this age group and can then move onto those aged 39 or younger.

And finally... A message of thanks from our Chief Executive Mark Hackett as we pass the 200,000 first dose mark.

"This has been a remarkable few months and we wouldn't be where we are today without the enormous commitment of our staff, GP surgeries and now pharmacies and the huge support of our communities. We are immensely grateful for all those who ensure this huge vaccination programme continues to be delivered effectively while reducing the numbers of tragic deaths and hospital admissions."

That's all for this week. Many thanks for reading. We'll catch up again next week.