



Managing Covid infections in homeless accommodation settings webinar – attendee Q&A

Resources and responses to a selection of questions submitted by webinar attendees

How do we promote vaccine uptake?

Question: *How should vaccine hesitancy be addressed among residents?*

It is important that staff and residents receive the COVID-19 vaccination. There are vaccination hubs and some pharmacies, which are offering walk-in clinics. GP registration and proof of address are not required.

A continual offer of the vaccination alongside engagement with residents have been shown to be helpful. If you would like to encourage vaccination uptake in your settings, you could contact the vaccine co-ordinator in your local authority or look at the ICS websites in your area for vaccinations centres:

- North West London: <https://www.nwlondonics.nhs.uk/>
- North East London: <https://www.eastlondonhcp.nhs.uk/>
- North Central London: <https://northcentrallondonccg.nhs.uk/>
- South West London: <https://swlondonccg.nhs.uk/covid/where-can-you-get-vaccinated/>
- South East London: <https://selondonccg.nhs.uk/what-we-do/covid-19/covid-19-vaccine/pop-up-clinics/>

Groundswell has produced helpful resources to support and instil vaccine confidence. This includes translated leaflets on the Covid vaccines which can be printed and distributed free of charge: <https://groundswell.org.uk/the-covid-19-vaccine/>

Other resources can be found on the HLP homeless health Covid vaccines [toolkit](#):

Question: *How can we promote vaccinations among people not accommodated be addressed?*

There are a number of outreach organisations providing vaccinations for people experiencing homelessness. The UCLH Find & Treat team can also provide advice around vaccine confidence.

Contact the team at: haltTeam.cnwl@nhs.net

Communication and engagement

Question: *How should staff approach vaccine resistance and isolating chaotic individuals i.e. dual diagnoses?*

Please see the above response regarding promoting vaccine uptake.

The HLP website have resources from a variety of sources on help to support residents during periods of isolation.

Also see [FAQs question 10](#) response on how to protect clinically vulnerable residents.

Question: *How should the measures suggested be adapted/communicated to meet the needs of those with limited English or those with diverse cultural backgrounds?*

Groundswell has launched a new COVID-19 guidance leaflet, containing up-to-date information for people experiencing homelessness following the recent change in restrictions.

With cases still high and vaccine uptake low amongst people experiencing homelessness, it covers the latest guidance on symptoms, staying safe, testing and vaccinations. It is available in two formats:

1. [An A4 printable version available here.](#)
2. [An A6 folded leaflet version](#), which is available for services to order free [using this link](#)

Question: *How can infection control be maintained during night services which are often reliant on the time and good will of volunteers?*

Site managers can reinforce measures using posters to remind staff and residents of key infection prevention and control advice.

To help stop the spread of the virus and protect others, staff and residents should be supported to continue to wear a face covering, maintain social distancing and open windows whilst indoors.

Further information can be found in the [FAQs and webinar recording](#). These resources can be shared with volunteers to help them understand the IPC requirements that should be followed.

Adapting IPC measures in hostel settings

Question: *With national restrictions lifted, what infection control measures and isolation requirements in settings such as hostels be kept in place?*

Refer to [updated FAQs document](#) for updated advice on measures in homeless accommodation settings

An overview of infection prevention and control measures highlighted by PHE London can also be seen in [slides 32-51 here](#).

Question: *How do we manage residents visitors in an hostel setting?*

See [FAQs document response 11](#): What to do with new residents and visitors?

It is advised to limit visitors entering the facility. Visitors that do have to attend should be strongly encouraged wear a face covering whilst indoors and to maintain social distancing at all times. Hand hygiene should be encouraged on entering the facility.

Question: *How can we enforce wearing masks on all of our premises?*

See [slide 55](#) on *St Mungo's approach to staff and resident communication*

Put up posters to remind staff and residents of key infection prevention and control advice such as mask wearing in communal areas.

Residents and staff should be encouraged to wear face coverings in shared spaces. It is important to note that even when wearing a face covering, social distancing must be maintained as much as possible. Encouraging a community response through verbal and written communication such as 'thank you for wearing a mask' should be used in place of mandating language.

Question: *How should settings approach infection control for those not wishing to or reluctant to follow guidelines and are refusing to take the vaccine?*

Sites should encourage and support all staff and residents to get two doses of the vaccine.

Vaccinations have been shown to be effective in preventing severe disease and hospitalisation from COVID-19, however to get their full effect two doses are needed. Though they help to stop people from becoming seriously ill, they do not fully prevent people from catching the virus and passing it on to others. This is why it is important to remain vigilant and continue to follow the advice on preventing and controlling infections and reducing risk in the [FAQs document](#).

Whilst efforts have been tremendous to vaccinate this group, levels of uptake are still not adequate to protect this population. This poses a significant increased risk of COVID-19 infections and outbreaks in a population who are likely to be more vulnerable. It is essential to encourage all staff and residents to get vaccinated.

See [slide 56](#) on *St Mungo's approach to vaccinations among staff and residents*.

Additional Covid-19 resources for homeless health can be found at:

<https://www.healthylondon.org/resource/homeless-health-during-covid-19/>

HLP Homeless Health Team

hlp.homelesshealthcovid19team@nhs.net

www.healthylond.org