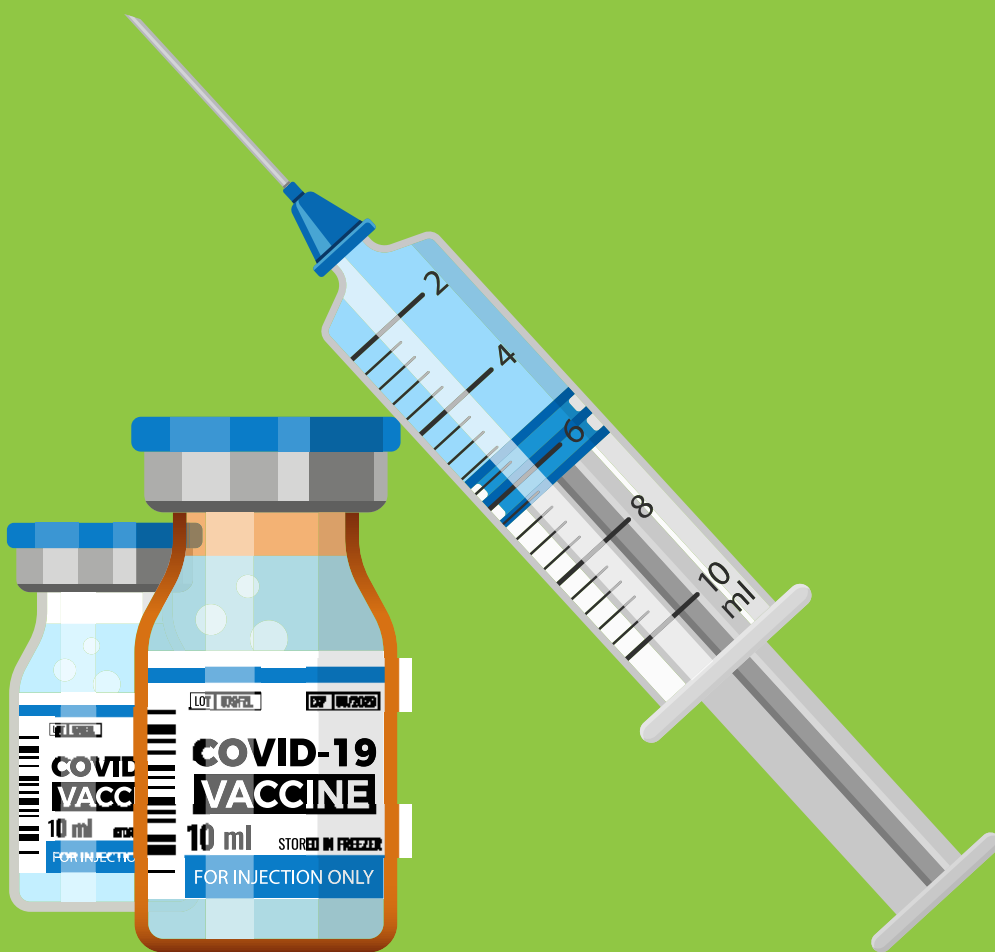


Helping people to get their Covid vaccine



**A Healthwatch Kent
report**

October 2021

Last year **2169** people contacted us for one of two things; sharing their experience of local health and social care services, or seeking information about how to navigate the complex world of health and social care.

77 people have contacted us about the Covid vaccination programme and **37** of those were people who were struggling to get their jab.

How did we help?

We had so many varied enquiries. On most occasions we knew the answer, but if we didn't know, we tried to find out.

To help more people, we shared our learnings on our website; firstly through an interview with the Lead for the Vaccination programme ([click here to watch it](#)) and later in a series of articles on our website ([click here to view](#)).

Supporting professionals as well as the general public

Professionals came to us for support too. For example, Public Health in Kent asked if we could help secure vaccinations for their substance mis-use workers to enable them to continue working directly with people who needed their help.

We were able to give Public Health all the information they needed to book vaccinations for their staff, including guidance about how to use the system and links to the booking forms.

Carer organisations equally came to us seeking help to get vaccinations for their carers. We helped them too, unlocking the system blockage that was preventing them from using the online booking system.

Support for Carers

Lots of Carers got in touch seeking clarification on where they were on the priority list for vaccination. We shared their concerns with the Vaccine team and asked them to make it clearer on their website which they did.

See the website [here](#).

Helping people with Learning Disabilities to get their vaccine

We know that people with learning disabilities were particularly impacted by Covid and the associated lockdowns. Not only were peoples' routines affected, there is a proven increased risk of dying from Covid amongst people with intellectual and development disabilities (IDD). This has naturally added to peoples' anxiety.

We were contacted by people who were unsure if they were eligible for the vaccine and how to book it. For example, we heard from one lady whose brother had not yet been contacted. We were able to reassure them that all adults with learning disabilities in Kent could book a Covid vaccine and that any individual with a learning disability who had not yet been contacted, should check that their contact information held by their GP was up to date and that they were registered with the GP with a learning disability, as this could be the cause of delay. As a result of our support, their brother was able to secure a vaccine appointment.

We shared the latest information on our website to help other people who may have been unsure. Read the information [here](#)

Making the visit to a vaccine centre a little bit easier

Parents of young people with IDD got in touch because they had found vaccination centres to be over stimulating for people with IDD. They told us that screened off areas would hugely benefit their families offering a quieter, less distracting area with more privacy.

We took that feedback to the Community Health Trust who manage the vaccination centres. They included our feedback in their review of vaccine centres which resulted in alternative, more familiar locations being used to vaccinate people with learning difficulties. Local churches and the Mencap office are just two examples of different venues that have since been used to provide more familiar surroundings and quieter locations for people with IDD to get their vaccine.

Obviously we updated the parents who originally got in touch about the progress that had been made as a result of their feedback.



Do you have a story to tell?

Get in touch! Your feedback, no matter how small, could make a big difference to someone else.

Share your story whichever way works best for you.

Online:

<https://portal.ek360.co.uk/HealthwatchKent/have-your-say>

By phone on freephone 0808 801 0102

By email info@healthwatchkent.co.uk

By text on 07525 861 639 (use this option to let us know if you need a British Sign Language Interpreter)

Thank you

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