

# **Coronavirus – appointments now announced for the next priority group**

**Those people who have underlying health conditions and also unpaid carers are beginning to receive Covid-19 vaccination appointments.**

Priority group 6 is one of the largest on the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) list.

The first to be invited will be people who have conditions which are included on both the JCVI priority list and the flu vaccine list. Although there is some overlap, the two lists are not exactly the same. They will be invited at the same time as unpaid carers who receive carers' benefits or who have been identified by GPs.

The Scottish Government explained that carers who do not receive carers benefits, and who have not been identified by GPs, will be asked to come forward to register for their vaccine at a later date through an online portal or the national helpline.

Work is also ongoing to identify people with underlying conditions who are not on the modified flu vaccine list, and they will be invited shortly.

**Anyone aged 70 or over who has not**

**yet been invited for their vaccine should visit [nhsinform.scot](https://nhsinform.scot) for further advice, or call the national helpline on 0800 030 8013.**

Health Secretary Jeane Freeman said: "As we move through the JCVI priority list, we will continue to maximise the number of vaccinations depending on available supply. Although a small number of people in group 6 will already have been invited in some parts of Scotland, we are now able to begin to roll out these invites more widely. Boards will begin to send the invites as their supply levels allow, and once they have completed a good proportion of 65-69-year-olds.

"This is one of the largest group of people on the priority list, so please be patient. It may take several weeks to get through the whole cohort. The age range of people in this cohort can be as young as 16 and their underlying condition may not be obvious to the outside world. I would stress that the offer at this time is based on a clinical judgment so we would strongly encourage people of all ages to take up this offer should it come.

"As a result of the high uptake in the last few weeks and a lower supply of vaccine than we had originally anticipated, we have had to adjust the number of appointments in the past week, and for the foreseeable future. We must also ensure we have enough vaccine for second doses when they are due as this provides longer lasting protection against the virus. All of this will mean that some of our vaccination centres may be less busy in the next couple of weeks.

"The vaccination programme is one of three key ways we are working to beat this virus, along with our expanded testing programme to identify cases and break chains of transmission and the important lockdown restrictions everyone in Scotland

must follow. All these measures work to greatest effect when they work together.”

## **JCVI priority group 6 includes people aged 16 to 64 with the following conditions:**

- a blood cancer (such as leukaemia, lymphoma or myeloma)
- diabetes
- dementia
- a heart problem
- a chest complaint or breathing difficulties, including bronchitis, emphysema or severe asthma
- a kidney disease
- a liver disease
- lowered immunity due to disease or treatment (such as HIV infection, steroid medication, chemotherapy or radiotherapy)
- rheumatoid arthritis, lupus or psoriasis (who may require long term immunosuppressive treatments)
- who have had an organ transplant
- have had a stroke or a transient ischaemic attack (TIA)
- a neurological or muscle wasting condition
- a severe or profound learning disability
- a problem with the spleen, such as sickle cell disease, or those who have had their spleen removed
- have a BMI of above 40
- are severely mentally ill