

# **Coronavirus – drive through mass vaccination centre to open at Queen Margaret University**

**NHS Lothian is putting the final touches to the new drive-through mass vaccination centre which will start operating next week.**

The centre at Queen Margaret University (QMU) will be the first of its kind in the health board area when it opens to thousands of patients on Wednesday 10 February 2021.

Patients will remain in their cars while the teams of vaccinators administer the jags.



QMU is the third mass vaccination centre to open in Lothian, after the EICC and the Members Pavilion at the Royal Highland Centre. It will initially be capable of vaccinating approximately 720 people per day at 12 stations.

Colin Briggs, Director of Strategic Planning, NHS Lothian, said: “The opening of our third mass vaccination centre and our only drive through is a significant moment for NHS Lothian and for East Lothian.

“A lot of planning has gone into the preparation of the QMU site to ensure that the venue runs as smoothly as possible. It has taken a lot of work, in a short time to get us to this point and I’m really proud of all of the work and effort from all of our teams.

“We have now vaccinated the vast majority of our first priority groups, including frontline health and social care staff; care home staff and residents and people over the age

of 80.”

This week NHS Lothian has vaccinated more than 100,000 people.

Lothian GPs have delivered a quarter (25%) of all vaccines given in surgeries in Scotland and some practices have had a 99% uptake of vaccine in offer in the over 80s.

Mr Briggs added: “We have reached a major milestone this week in the programme, with over 100,000 people vaccinated across Lothian, along with thousands more expected in the coming weeks.

“It is due to the hard work undertaken by our staff and partners that this has been achieved and we thank them for their efforts.

“Our message has been clear from the start – if we wish our lives to return to normal we need to vaccinate as many people as possible. This will help save lives and provide protection to all our communities.

“When you do receive an appointment, we really would urge you to keep it, even if it is at a centre which is not closest to your home. We need to move fast to provide protection to as many people as possible and the easiest way to do that is for people to keep their original appointment where possible.”

People aged between 75-79 and those most clinically vulnerable will continue to be given appointments to be vaccinated by their GP, while those aged between 70-74 and 65 to 69 are now being invited to mass vaccination sites and smaller community venues for their injections, depending on their need.



Sir Paul Grice, Principal of Queen Margaret University, said the university was proud to join forces to help in the battle against Covid-19.

He said: "Throughout our history, the University has been focused on tackling some of the most pressing issues facing society. We are proud to play our part in supporting the biggest mass vaccination programme our country has ever undertaken."

Paul McGirk, Chief Executive of Hub South East, NHS Lothian's Development Partner, said: "We are delighted to be working with NHS Lothian in the roll out of the Covid-19 vaccination centres across the region – surely one of the most important infrastructure developments in recent times. Our contractor, Morrison Construction, our designers and the rest of our supply chain partners are making excellent progress, pulling out all the stops to ensure that the QMU site is handed over safely, to a high quality and on time for its first patients

to receive vaccines next week.

“Following the opening of the EICC Centre last week, and with more set to open in the coming weeks, this has been a fantastic partnership effort by everyone involved. From sourcing appropriate venues, to contract negotiation, design and construction on site, this demonstrates the spectrum of services available through the Hub programme and shows just what can be achieved by working together. Hub South East is delighted to be playing its part in this vital national effort.”

NHS Lothian has been working with councils, health and social care partnerships and other partners in recent weeks.

On 15 February, a vaccination centre with 32 stations will be created at Edinburgh Park in the former Royal Bank of Scotland building, Dummond House, followed by a second site at The Royal Highland Centre which is expected to open in March.

Smaller community clinics will deliver vaccinations in the local area for people with complex needs or who, for other reasons, absolutely cannot and would not be expected to travel to a mass centre.

If patients absolutely cannot keep the appointment they have been given, they are being asked to call the COVID-19 Vaccination Helpline on 0800 030 8013 to rearrange their appointment. If they are aged 75 and over, they should phone their GP practice to rearrange their appointment.

More details and information about the venues can be found on [NHS Lothian's website](#)

For more information about the vaccine and appointments on [NHS Inform.scot](#)