

Coronavirus – drive through vaccination centre open at Queen Margaret University

Mary Foster from Musselburgh was one of the first to be given the vaccine upon the opening of the mass vaccination site at Queen Margaret University (QMU) in East Lothian.

Mrs Foster said: “I think this is great, I’m really excited and I think people who don’t want to be vaccinated should think again.”



Mary Foster attended QMU for her vaccination

The new drive through mass vaccination centre, a first for Lothian, is set up in the car park of QMU and is initially capable of vaccinating around 720 people every day at 12 stations, seven days a week.

Teams of vaccinators will be able to deliver vaccinations to patients while they sit in their own car.

Pat Wynne, Director of Nursing for Primary and Community Care, NHS Lothian, said: "The opening of our only drive through mass vaccination centre is a big day for both NHS Lothian and for East Lothian. It is a unique site for us and it will allow us to deliver more vaccines to the people we serve.

"A significant amount of effort has gone into the preparation of the QMU site to ensure that the drive through will run as quickly and smoothly as possible. I am extremely proud of the work undertaken by our staff and partners to get this site up and running and ready to receive patients."

QMU is the fourth mass vaccination centre to open in Lothian,

following the EICC, Strathbrock Health Centre and the Royal Highland Centre.





QMU opened its doors during the spell of snowy weather
Sir Paul Grice, Principal of Queen Margaret University, said:
“Queen Margaret University has a proud history of responding to some of the most pressing issues that face society. We are therefore pleased that our University can offer space for a drive-through vaccination facility which will serve our local communities. Supporting the country’s mass vaccination programme fits so well with Queen Margaret’s purpose of helping to create a better society and the value we place upon partnership.”

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 pulled out all the stops to ensure that the QMU site was handed over safely, to a high

quality and on time for its first patients to receive vaccines today. 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.”

Mr Wynne added: “We are now moving through our vaccination programme at pace. When you do receive an appointment, we would urge you to keep it, even if it is at a centre that seems far away from your home. In order for the programme to be successful we need to vaccinate as many people as possible and the easiest way to do that is for people to keep their original appointment.

“Our advice is straight forward – 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 across Lothian.”

NHS Lothian has worked with councils, health and social care partnerships and other partners in recent weeks to deliver the mass vaccination programme.

On 15 February new vaccination centres were opened at Edinburgh Park in the former Royal Bank of Scotland building and Pyramids Business Park (PBP) in West Lothian. A second site at the Royal Highland Centre is expected to open in March. Lothian announced that they have rerouted their Skylink 200, 300 and 400 services to stop at RHS Ingliston for those attending for vaccination there.

Smaller community clinics will deliver vaccinations locally 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 or visit <https://www.nhsinform.scot/covid-19-vaccine> 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 <https://www.nhslothian.scot/Coronavirus/Vaccine/Pages/default.aspx>