

Coronavirus – concern over vaccine letters in East Lothian

A campaign to ensure people do not miss their Covid vaccine has emerged on social media amid claims some appointment letters are not being delivered on time.

Social media posts sharing a freephone number to check the status of appointments are urging people who think they should have had their first jab by now to call it. The Health Secretary said at the daily briefing that people are advised to be patient and that the letters are coming out by post.

Some said they discovered they were due to be vaccinated in a matter of days when they called, but The Scottish Government has insisted that there is no issue with letters going out.

A spokesperson said that a delay between appointments being booked and letters arriving was to be expected.

They said: “We are aware that there have been some people proactively calling the National Helpline to see if they have an appointment scheduled, ahead of receiving an invite.

“There can, on occasion, be a slight lag between an appointment scheduled and an appointment letter arriving on someone’s doorstep.”

On one social media page, people thanked the sharer of the National Helpline number after it prompted them to call and

they discovered they had appointments.

One woman said she was told by the person who answered the phone that a lot of letters had been misplaced.

Others said they called after becoming concerned that they had not received a letter, despite being in the priority groups which were being covered, only to find they had an appointment due in a few days.

Another Facebook page called on people to call the helpline if they were concerned with claims some invites had arrived after the appointment date.

And there were concerns about the location of appointments with one Haddington resident revealing they had been asked to travel to Bathgate.

However, many people reported being given alternative appointments at East Lothian Community Hospital when requested.

The Scottish Government spokesperson added: "If an appointment date is not suitable an appointment can be rescheduled by visiting NHS Inform or by calling the COVID-19 vaccination helpline on 0800 030 8013.

"We are currently vaccinating priority groups 6 (underlying health conditions and unpaid carers) and 7 (60-64 years). We will start to invite groups 8 (55-59 years) and 9 (50-54 years) shortly to ensure the whole over 50 population and priority groups are offered their first vaccine by Mid-April."

by Marie Sharp Local Democracy Reporter

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