

Coronavirus – Jason Leitch becomes a vaccinator – and wants you to sign up too

National Clinical Director joins national programme.

The National Clinical Director Jason Leitch is becoming a vaccinator and urges others to enrol and help accelerate the national booster vaccine programme.

Since 19 November, the equivalent of 300 full-time additional staff (more than 1000 individuals) have joined the national vaccination effort and health boards are actively recruiting to create extra capacity.

Following the most recent advice from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) everyone aged 18 and over who is eligible will be offered a slot for the booster vaccine by the end of January.

Currently those aged 40-49 are invited to make an appointment through the online portal or the national helpline, from 12 weeks after their second dose. The national programme is also delivering second doses to 16 and 17 years olds.



Professor Jason Leitch

Professor Leitch said: "I am pleased to join the fantastic team at NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde and look forward to helping administer booster jabs to adults and second doses to 16 and 17 years olds as we continue to protect Scotland's population as quickly as possible. To be a small part of this national mission is a real privilege. It also gives me the opportunity to thank the clinical teams and volunteers who have got us this far.

“This has been the biggest immunisation programme in the history of the NHS and the hard work and commitment shown by health boards and vaccination teams across Scotland means we have the highest vaccination rate for people aged 12 and over of all UK nations for first, second and boosters/third doses and the winter vaccination programme has already delivered more than 2 million booster and third doses to the most vulnerable groups, covering 45% of the adult population (aged 18+). However, we would warmly welcome any former NHS employees and of course, they will receive full training before giving any vaccines. I’ll be helping when I can alongside my main role.

“Even a shift a week will help, so if you’re a dentist, a nurse, an optometrist or a doctor and you can help us then please contact your local health board. Every vaccine dose given is another step out of the pandemic. If you don’t have a clinical background, it’s not a problem, you can still assist the programme in another capacity through the British Red Cross.

“We have accepted the JCVI’s updated recommendations and aim to offer the booster vaccine to everyone aged 18 or older who is eligible by the end of January, and we would love some more vaccinators to join our incredibly national programme to assist us through this particularly busy period.”

Vaccination Programme Director at NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde Anne Harkness said: “In the last year, our vaccination team at NHSGGC have administered more than 2.1 million jags, working with the public to protect our communities. We are continuing to build our pool of vaccinators and we are delighted to welcome Jason to the vaccination team and wish him – and all the new recruits – well.”