



Mword Issue 73 - Dr Michelle Drage's latest update for GPs and practice teams

18 November 2020

Dear Colleague
Another temperature check – just to be sure
The deadline for practices and their respective PCNs to identify designated sites from which to deliver the Covid-19 vaccination programme has been and gone. Whilst we await word from NHSEI on the proposed sites, I'd like to beg a couple more minutes of your time to see how you are doing. As before, it will only take a moment of your precious time. It would be incredibly helpful to get your thoughts before Friday if you can. Our previous temperature check found that whilst around 45% of practice respondents intend "signing up to the DES, now NHS ES", around the same figure are unsure; and over half want more information and support to help them make a decision. For what it is worth, my take today is this:

We all desperately want these vaccines to be successful.

The principle of First Do No Harm remains our over-riding duty as doctors.

Sorting the hype from the best available evidence is challenging right now. We cannot allow the hype to influence us in guiding / consenting / vaccinating patients.

Evidence about the efficacy of, and longer term protection provided by, the vaccine is understandably incomplete.

Our "temperature checks" show that while approximately 45% of practice respondents intend "signing up to the DES, now NHS ES", approximately 45% of respondents are unsure, and over half want more information and support to help them make a decision.

With the vaccination programme evolving by the day, and given the challenges of the nature, storage and delivery of these vaccines, it is still far from clear how it will operate in our complex capital city, where all of the usual limitations of space, physical and organisational boundaries will need to be overcome.

December 1st is the date set by Government for the NHS to be ready, but it is increasingly clear it is highly unlikely to be the date on which the vaccine rollout begins.

Meanwhile:

Lots of people are having lots of meetings.

It is important to avoid over-complicating this process with unproductive activity.

GPs and practice teams still have to do the day job.

So, how are you? Please let us know so we can continue to use this information, combined with feedback via other channels, to understand and raise your concerns at a local and national level. We will continue to push for a practitioner and patient centred approach; not only in the best interests of

practice stability mid-pandemic, but recognising that practices' local knowledge and understanding of vulnerable cohorts is vital in ensuring the vaccine reaches them. Our Londonwide LMCs Living Guide continues to provide valuable information to help you through the current pandemic. I encourage you to continue to use it. Latest updates include further detail on supporting care homes, with advice on the Covid-19 Vaccination programme due very soon. As ever I welcome your feedback at mword@lmc.org.uk, and as always, know that my team of experts and leaders here at Londonwide LMCs are by your side. Keep well. Stay safe. With best wishes

Dr Michelle Drage MBBS FRCGPCEO, Londonwide LMCs