

NHS Heywood, Middleton and Rochdale responses to public questions received during January 2021

Please note the CCG will not provide a response to questions requesting an opinion-based answer and is only able to provide factual responses.

At present many of our staff are working on Covid solutions, therefore the CCG may not be able to answer your questions as quickly as we would normally do.

Question submitted on 13 January 2021 (by a member of the public TE on behalf of BH4M)

A quick investigation reveals that some GP surgeries are now refusing telephone requests for repeat prescriptions. At a time when people are supposed to be staying at home, this can't happen. You can't ask people to go out to surgeries to put in their requests in person. People in isolation more often don't have someone to help.

What is happening with GPs where the phone service seems to have been withdrawn at a time when it's needed more than ever to help people stay at home? Not everyone has the ability to get out to the surgery and shops.

Response: *The ability to order prescriptions via telephone was withdrawn due to potential safety issues in January 2019, one year prior to Covid.*

At that time a question was submitted by BH4M to Governing Body on 19 January 2019 and the following response provided:

It was confirmed that due to potential safety issues, the Care Quality Commission (CQC) have advised that practices should not take repeat prescriptions over the telephone and these must be requested online or face to face.

During the current pandemic, practices are doing their utmost to be as supportive as possible responding to individual needs.

Question submitted on 13 January 2021 (by a member of the public AW)

Local Homeless People & Covid 19 Vaccine roll out:

Today (13/01/2021) Oldham Council teamed up with local GPs in a bid to ensure that rough sleepers and those without home are inoculated against Covid 19. They are the first in the country to roll-out a programme specifically designed to vaccinate homeless people (1).

This progressive and humane initiative received favourable national publicity in the print media, online, on radio & television.

Could I ask what plans there are, if any, for the scheme to vaccinate homeless people to be extended to cover homeless, rough sleepers & hostel & bed & breakfast dwellers in the Heywood, Middleton & Rochdale area?

As we know homeless people are at risk of Covid due to low or no immune systems & also at risk of transmitting it through the wider community through no fault of their own. I am aware of one homeless person still sleeping on the streets of Rochdale & sofa surfing who should be screening because he has no Spleen and is on the NHS list for those at high risk of Covid 19. Is he a lone

example or more typical of the local response to meet the needs of those without homes during the pandemic?

Founder of Homeless Friendly Dr Chauhan has pointed out that: ' As a health carer who has worked on the Corona virus front-line at care homes, I can absolutely see why older people and health workers need to be prioritised. But so too do the homeless. Each winter they face problems such as hypothermia, pneumonia and even frostbite. Does death from COVID-19 also now be added to that list of shame?'

APPENDIX:

(1). ' Homeless man gets Covid-19 jab in city council's rough sleepers vaccine drive ' , Daily Mirror (13/01/2021) https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/homeless-man-gets-covid-jab-23311099?utm_source=twitter.com&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=sharebar

Response: Locally Rochdale Borough are following the national guidance, as such homeless people would be picked up in each cohort as agreed nationally by Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI). Please see response to question 5 for details of the local vaccine programme.