

Advice and Guidance

Community Transport and Vaccine Roll Out Provision

Last updated 15 January 2021

Who is this guidance for? This guidance is for CTA members wanting to get involved in COVID-19 vaccination programmes. It's been developed with member input from our advice service and weekly member drop-ins

Contents

- Introduction** 2
- Why involve community transport in supporting mass vaccination?**..... 2
- How to get involved** 3
 - Useful links to vaccination guidance 3
- Frequently Asked Questions**..... 4
 - Can I run this service under a section 19 permit? 4
 - Class A 4
 - Class B 4
 - Class C 4
 - How will we be engaged to do this work? 4
 - What information do I need before entering a vaccination hub/site? 5
 - Can I offer this service under the current restrictions where I am? 5
 - Can my drivers get vaccinated? 5

Introduction

During the coronavirus pandemic, community transport providers across the UK have done incredible work adapting their services to meet the needs of their communities during these uncertain times. With the COVID-19 vaccination programme now being rolled out, many community transport providers are getting involved with making sure that members of their community can access the vaccine. It is anticipated that there will be a large number of individuals in the higher risk categories who need to travel to vaccination and test centres, who may need to call upon CT services. This is a situation that is likely to continue for several months into 2021. In classic fashion, community transport providers are enthusiastic to help individuals and communities attain the vaccine. Thus far, we have spoken to many organisations who have started this process and those who are eager to get involved.

We've put together a number of indicators and guidelines to support organisations as they begin to provide transport for the COVID-19 vaccination roll-out. As the vaccination programme develops we will be adding new guidance, so check back here for any updates.

TAS Partnership has also developed some useful guidance to help Community Transport Providers get involved. This can be accessed at the following link: ctauk.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/TAS-Partnership-COVID-19-Vaccinations-Community-Transport.pdf

Why involve community transport in supporting mass vaccination?

- Community transport services are targeted to those underserved by mainstream transport, especially people who are less mobile and live in sparsely populated areas. Core users of CT include those in high-risk groups that may face barriers to accessing a vaccine centre - older people, disabled people, people with low incomes and those without access to a car or public transport.
- Community transport has a ready-to-go network covering all local authority areas with appropriate vehicles (that are accessible and adapted to reduce the risk of virus transmission), and trained staff and volunteers with DBS checks.
- Journeys into health settings are the second most common journey purpose for CT providers and some are already involved in their areas in helping people access vaccinations, meaning many CTs are well practised in enabling people to access medical care.
- CTOs already have strong links with local public bodies and other civil society organisations, enabling coordinated and integrated support for local populations.

How to get involved

- Make use of any wider networks or groups that you are involved with, where there is a known NHS representative (e.g. Local Resilience Forum), to share your thoughts, knowledge or interest. It is likely that your local Clinical Commissioning Group (England), Regional Health Boards (Scotland), Local Health Boards (Wales) and Local Commissioning Groups (NI), will have put provisions in place to support the roll out of the vaccine. This may include transport. If you would like to be involved, we suggest that you contact your local body.
- Make contact with your Local Government body i.e. County Council, Local Authority.
- Let your existing clientele know that you are offering your transport services in support of the vaccination programme.
- Contact your local GP surgery – we recommend that you get in contact with the practice manager as they often deal with peripheral queries as well as medical. They may be happy to signpost patients to your service.
- Send materials though the post or email – particularly targeting organisations who work with higher risk groups or individuals. Please ensure that all your contact information is up to date and easily accessible to the reader. It is also important to guarantee that your organisation is contactable and a clear channel of referral is in place.
- Delivering materials by hand – if you can get access to a reception desk (at a less busy time) there is a chance that you could get a letter or publicity material to the best person.
- General use of media – using media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and local radio, instigate an awareness campaign letting people know your service exists. This may also catch the attention of vaccination hubs or centres. A list of the vaccination sites is available at the links below.
- Ideally, any work you do on this can be done within an existing funded service or you are compensated for the contribution you make. We know some members are providing their services for free. In any of these circumstances, especially if you are providing services for free, it may be useful to record the financial value of what you are providing, which could help raise your profile and support future funding conversations.

Useful links to vaccination guidance

- Guidance for [England](#)
- Guidance for [Scotland](#)
- Guidance for [Wales](#)
- Guidance [Northern Ireland](#)

Frequently Asked Questions

Can I run this service under a section 19 permit?

This question is coming up as some operators are concerned they may be asked to transport someone who is not one of their registered users or an obvious fit with one of the classes of passenger that their Permit allows them to carry.

Here we've offered some practical suggestions of how to manage this for each class of passenger based on practices other CTs have adopted. We are also trying to get some reassurance on this from the Department for Transport

Whether a Section 19 permit can be used to carry a passenger will depend on which class(es) of passengers are included on the permit (which displayed on the permit disc and A4 permit paper).

Class A

If a permit is issued allowing only passengers in Class A (members of the body holding the permit) to be carried, that permit could not be used to carry non-members. There have been no relaxations to these rules. We understand that some community transport groups have relaxed their membership criteria during the pandemic to broaden access to anyone needing support throughout the lockdowns. Often membership has been given free, but some groups have also found increasing their membership fees to be an important source of income. An immediate solution to enabling all those needing access to vaccines to be carried under this permit, we suggest developing a booking system that ensures that anyone being transported also becomes a member.

Class B

Often, organisations whose main activity is providing transport will have Class B. Their objectives are to provide transport to those who have no other alternatives. As such, organisations with Class B on their permit (covering persons whom the body exists to benefit, and persons assisting them), there would be no problem with them providing transport to help individuals to access a vaccine appointment.

Class C

An argument could also be made, especially for those classed as clinically vulnerable, that Class C (disabled persons or persons who are seriously ill and persons assisting them) would allow the transport of passengers to receive a vaccine.

How will we be engaged to do this work?

There will be a variety of approaches and local arrangements. We are not aware of any national policy for how this ought to be organised.

Some members are transporting existing users as part of their regular services and others will be brokering arrangements locally with health bodies and possibly local authorities where they may

already be contracted to work with them. As this is a response to an emergency situation, some of the usual rules and processes for how contracts are awarded (e.g. open advertising and competition) may not be followed and it is up to the contracting authority to satisfy itself that the engagement processes it is adopting are permitted.

This guidance released at the beginning of the pandemic which allows commissioners to relax the rules on how contracts are given. You can find this at:

[assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/873521/PPN_01-20 - Responding to COVID19.v5_1 .pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/873521/PPN_01-20_-_Responding_to_COVID19.v5_1_.pdf)

What information do I need before entering a vaccination hub/site?

Before transporting a service user to the vaccination hub or test centre it is important to find out the following information from the centre manager or coordinator;

1. Can I access this site with a vehicle?
2. Is there parking on site? – Bear in mind that it may take some time for a service user to receive the vaccine, therefore you will need parking, preferably accessible parking that is in close proximity to the venue, to be available.
3. What needs do the service users have? - It is important to enquire about the specific mobility needs of the service user you are transporting before you undertake the journey. This will enable you and the vaccination centre to cater for that individual, making it a comfortable experience e.g a place to sit, out of the cold.

Can I offer this service under the current restrictions where I am?

Guidance from the UK Government, Scottish Government, Northern Ireland Executive and Welsh Government is no longer consistent. With lockdowns and different tiers of restrictions in place across the UK, each operator should ascertain if a journey is permissible in their local area. You can find the latest information for each nation at the following link: ctauk.org/covid19-guidance/

Can my drivers get vaccinated?

The [Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation](https://www.jcvi.org.uk/) (JCVI) have identified nine priority groups for the first phase of the Covid-19 vaccinations. These are:

1. Residents in a care home for older adults and their carers
2. All those 80 years of age and over and frontline health and social care workers
3. All those 75 years of age and over
4. All those 70 years of age and over and clinically extremely vulnerable individuals
5. All those 65 years of age and over

6. All individuals aged 16 years to 64 years with underlying health conditions which put them at higher risk of serious disease and mortality
7. All those 60 years of age and over
8. All those 55 years of age and over
9. All those 50 years of age and over

The UK Government have yet to confirm how the roll out will work following the first nine groups, however JCVI have suggested that phase two of the roll out could be prioritised by occupation. This may include first responders, the military, those involved in the justice system, teachers, public servants essential to the pandemic response and, transport workers. Please also be aware that it is likely that each devolved Government will take a slightly different approach.

We understand that community transport drivers are continuing to provide essential services and will be critical to ensuring that those with no other alternatives are able to access a vaccine when it is offered to them. Given this, there is a strong argument that community transport drivers should be prioritised alongside social care staff and health workers. There have already been numerous calls from public transport workers and other frontline workers to the UK Government for this to happen.

This advocacy is ongoing and CTA will be sharing the insight we have gained from members to help strengthen these conversations. In the meantime, if you are in contact with your local Clinical Commissioning Group, Health Board or Local Authority and are involved with vaccination transport, then we would advise that you ask if they are able to show any discretion or make any prioritisations on a case by case basis

Further advice or support

If you need additional advice or support, remember you can always find our most up to date guidance for community transport providers at ctauk.org/covid19-guidance/ and you can get in touch with our advice service by emailing advice@ctauk.org.