



West Lancs COVID-19 Local information update

18th March 2022

Covid-19 situation

What's happening in West Lancs?

- This week Covid rates have continued to rise in West Lancs. However the rise has been less steep than last week's, and there are signs nationally that the rate is slowing.
- The number of new cases reported yesterday is **up by 49% in West Lancs** in comparison to last Friday, with a total of 863 cases being reported in the last 7 days.
- Across England, hospital admissions of patients with Covid have continued to increase rapidly - up by 25% in the last week. However, NHS data is showing that of those people testing positive on admission, only 44% were being treated primarily for Covid.



See the situation in your postcode [here](#).

BA.2 Omicron variant

The current rise in cases and hospitalisations across much of the western world is mainly being driven by the BA.2 variant of omicron first seen in Denmark.

There's lots of misinformation about BA.2 on social media, so it's important to know that **BA.2 isn't new** and it isn't a 'stealth' variant.

BA.2 has been **known about since last November** when the Omicron variant was discovered and found to exist as three genetically distinct varieties.

The one that took off most quickly was BA.1, and having run its course, the more transmittable BA.2 is on the rise. It currently accounts for over 50% of cases and is driving most of the recent upturn.

The good news is that analysis by UKHSA has shown that **we shouldn't be unduly worried** – for two reasons:

1. **BA.2 infection is no more severe** than BA.1 and is no more likely to result in hospitalisation
2. **The current vaccines (specifically boosters) are just as effective** against BA.2 as against the original BA.1 strain

So while resurgence is never good news, at the end of the day BA.2 is Omicron, just as BA.1 was, and so will behave similarly in terms of severity.

And because our immune systems have already been exposed to Omicron, it is likely to peak at a smaller number of cases overall – and far below the death tolls associated with the pre-vaccine peaks.

Latest covid data:

From the [Government Coronavirus Dashboard](#)



West Lancs Covid cases

In last 7 days to March 18th:

863 (+ 49%)

[See change over last 3 months here](#)



UK Covid cases

In last 7 days to March 18th:

552,198 (+ 38%)

[See changes over last year here](#)



People admitted to hospital - West Lancs

No. of people admitted to hospital due to covid up to March 13th:

53 (+ 56%)

[More West Lancs hospital data here](#)



People admitted to hospital - UK

No. of people admitted to hospital due to covid up to March 14th:

12,029 (+ 25%)

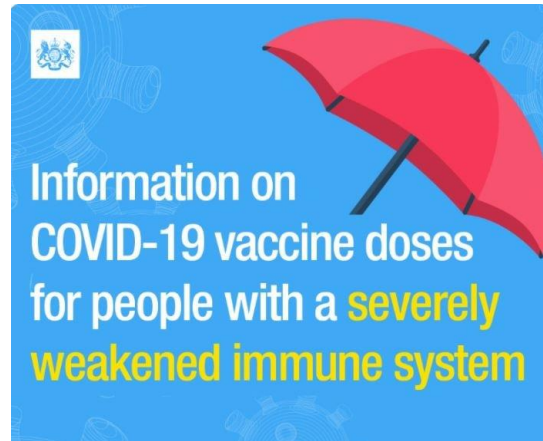
[More UK hospital data here](#)

Key news this week

Vaccinations for people with weakened immune system

People who had a severely weakened immune system at the time of getting their first two doses of the COVID-19 vaccine are eligible for **both a third dose and a booster dose**.

Find out more [here](#).



Boosters for vulnerable young people

NHS booster bookings have opened for most vulnerable 12 to 15 year olds.

The [national booking service has been updated](#) so that the most vulnerable in this cohort can quickly and easily book in a booster jab when they become eligible.

Travel changes

From 4am today, the remaining Covid travel restrictions to the UK were lifted. This means:

- no more passenger locator forms for arrivals
- no more tests for all arriving passengers, whether vaccinated or unvaccinated



Other countries are at different stages in the pandemic and many still require passengers to comply with requirements.

This comes two years after the first Covid lockdown measures were imposed in the UK. It marks the end of a rapidly-changing – and often complex – set of Covid rules for people arriving in the UK which started when people were first advised against all non-essential international travel in March 2020.

Covid vaccinations

Latest vaccination uptake: % population age 12+			
(to 16th March 2022)			
West Lancs	85% First dose	81% Second dose	65% Booster/third dose

UK	92% First dose	86% Second dose	67% Booster/third dose
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Never too late

Almost **53 million people** (92% of those aged 12+) have got at least one dose of the Covid vaccine and every day there are still more people getting their first jab.

It's never too late to get your first, second, or booster dose!



Who is eligible?

- Everyone aged 12 and over, and some children aged 5 to 11 can get a jab.
- You don't need an NHS Number or to be registered with a GP.
- **Check all eligibility [here](#)**

Boosters

- Everyone aged 16+ (or 12-15 in an 'at risk' category) is eligible for a booster 3 months after their second dose.
- People aged 75+, residents in care homes and those 12+ who are immunosuppressed can get a **spring booster** 6 months after their third dose/booster.

- 1. Book an appointment** online [here](#) or freephone 119
- 2. Find your nearest vaccine drop-in clinic** on [the NHS website](#).

Additional drop-in clinics: This weekend's local drop-in clinics are below and any new additions will be listed on [West Lancs CCG's webpage](#) each week.

Grab your jab this weekend at Hants Lane Clinic, Ormskirk
Accepting walk-ins for first, second and booster doses:

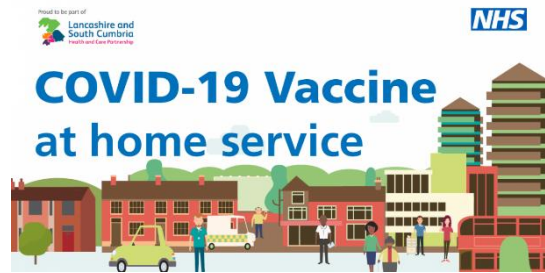
- **Saturday 19th March** 9am-1pm
- **Monday 21st March** 9:30am-12:30pm & 1:30pm-5pm

3. Request a home visit

Anyone who is shielding or doesn't feel comfortable using the existing vaccine services can now **book to be vaccinated at home**.

This service is for anyone aged 12 and over and provides all doses of the vaccine.

Find out more information and how to book online, [here](#).



Covid testing

If you have symptoms: You will need to self-isolate and get a PCR test [here](#).

If you don't have symptoms: Get free lateral flow tests by:

- Collecting FREE tests from a local collection site. Find your nearest collection point [here](#). Or
- Ordering FREE home testing kits online to be delivered to your home, [here](#).



Please note: Due to government changes to self-isolation rules, the Test & Trace Support Payment has now finished. See full information here: www.westlancs.gov.uk/more/emergencies/coronavirus/test-and-trace-support-payment.aspx

If you test positive

You are no longer legally required to self isolate if you test positive for Covid but **it is strongly advised you do**.

If you test positive, the government advice is to stay at home, and avoid contact with others.

>> Reminder: if you test positive, please report your positive Lateral Flow Tests [here](#). This helps track Covid trends accurately but must be done within 48 hours to be accepted on the system.

Resources and support

Household Support Fund finishes in two weeks

The Household Support Fund is **due to close on 31st March 2022**.

If you live in West Lancs and don't have enough resources to meet your immediate short-term needs, the Fund can help towards the cost of food, energy and other household essentials.

Please note: no applications will be accepted after 31 March 2022. Find out how to apply [here](#).

New Health & Wellbeing Drop-In

A new Health & Wellbeing Drop-In is being held at [The Pulse Skem](#), in Skelmersdale Concourse on the last Tuesday of every month.

With a range of well-being activities on offer, there's something for everyone - and all for free!

- Connect with people in your community
- Focus on living well

To secure your place, please leave your name & contact at the Pulse Desk or contact the Wellbeing Team on [01695 583340](tel:01695583340)

Social inclusion activities

There's lots of opportunities to get involved, meet other people and try new things through Birchwood's social inclusion activities.

Find out more [here](#).

Household Support Fund



Visit westlancs.gov.uk/bills-benefits/help-and-money-advice/household-support-fund for information on how to apply

A promotional poster for 'Singing & Music for Wellbeing'. The background is a teal color with silhouettes of hands holding musical notes. The text is white and includes the Lancashire Adult Learning logo, the event title, date, time, and location.

Lancashire Adult Learning

Singing & Music for Wellbeing

Tuesday 29th March
10:30am - 12:00pm

The Pulse
Unit 137 (1st floor, opposite Peacocks clothes store)
Concourse Shopping Centre
Skelmersdale,
WN8 6LN



Birchwood's Social Inclusion Timetable



Email: ereferral@wlcrisiscentre.org.uk Tel: 01695 713 248

	SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
Key							
● Artz Centre							
● Tanhouse			● Tea & Me 10:00 - 11:00				
● The Zone			● Birchwood Inclusion Shop 11:00 - 12:00	INCLUSION ● CAFE 11:30- 13:00 Tanhouse Community Centre	INCLUSION ● CAFE 11:30- 13:00 The Ecumenical Centre	INCLUSION ● CAFE 11:30- 13:00 The Zone (STOPPED Until March)	Veteran's Hub NEW LOCATION: West Lancs Diner ● 10:00 - 12:00 (FIRST SATURDAY OF THE MONTH)
● Ecumenical Centre			● Mediation 12:00-13:00				
● Ennerdale			● Yoga 13:00 - 14:00				
● Monthly			● Cooking Session 12:30 - 15:00	● Volunteer/ Employability Workshop 15:00 - 16:00	● Tribal Dance 12:30 - 14:00	● Creative Writing Class 10:00 - 12:00	● Knit & Chatter 12:00 - 15:00 (EVERY 2 WEEKS)
● Outdoors			● Psy-tap Therapy 6pm-8pm		● Bereavement Group 6pm-8pm	● Art, Craft & Flower Arranging 12:30 - 14:00	
★ Awareness/Important Date/Week		● Yoga 19:00 - 20:00					

Local support organisations

There are lots of local organisations that can offer help and support on a wide range of issues at this pandemic time.

Do pass this information on to anyone you know who needs a hand.