
New survey: Dorset's Covid-19 vaccination programme



We have launched a new survey to gather public feedback about Dorset's Covid-19 vaccination programme. While our local NHS is working hard to deliver vaccines across the county, healthcare providers recognise that public feedback will help them maximise the effectiveness of the vaccine programme. We are asking local people to share their views and experiences to help identify what is working well and where changes could be made. We will share our findings with our local NHS partners.

[Find out more and share your views and experiences](#)

Work with us and make a difference to young people's health and care services

We've had a great response to our campaign to recruit volunteer Young Listeners, so we are now starting the next stage of this important project. We will be training and supporting our Young Listeners to investigate what young people think about the health and care services they use, and what changes they would like to see.



We are an accredited centre for AQA's Unit Award Scheme, so our Young Listeners can become certified in a range of AQA approved training. This will help them design and deliver an impactful project that brings positive change to young people's health and care services in Dorset.

If you work with young people, or you know someone who does, it would be great to talk about how you could get involved. [Find our more and get in touch](#)

Difficulties accessing NHS dental care in Dorset



We continue to receive many enquiries about how to get NHS dental care in Dorset.

Unfortunately, Covid-19 has drastically reduced availability and access to dental care across the whole country. This recent report from Healthwatch England highlights the issues that Paul from Dorset has faced: [Dentistry and the impact of Covid-19](#)

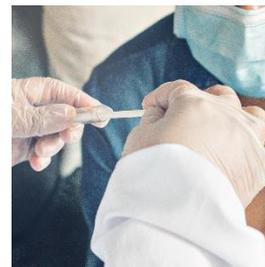
[Share your experiences with us](#) and we will continue to work with Healthwatch across the country to urge the Department of Health and Social Care to prioritise oral health and commit to improving access to dentistry for everyone who needs it.

Dorset Community Covid-19 Rapid Testing Service

Public Health Dorset is setting up a Dorset Community Rapid Testing Service to help contain the spread of Covid-19. Around one in three people who have Covid-19 show no symptoms so they could be spreading the virus without knowing it – this is known as being asymptomatic. Weekly asymptomatic testing is being offered to employees of businesses, charities and voluntary organisations that employ less than 250 people, and to self-employed people across who cannot work from home due to the nature of their role. To qualify for testing your business/organisation must provide an essential service or support

vulnerable people, and you should not already have access to asymptomatic testing.

You need to **register your interest online** if you want to use this service: [dorset-self.achieveservice.com/service/Community-Rapid-Testing](https://self.achieveservice.com/service/Community-Rapid-Testing)



Eating disorders: Raising awareness and support



This week (1-7 March) is Eating Disorders Awareness Week. Feelings of anxiety, uncertainty and social isolation have increased during the Covid-19 pandemic, and this has created an environment that is highly conducive to the development of eating disorders.

In his latest blog, Healthwatch Dorset volunteer Richie, who is studying a Master's in Nutrition and Behaviour at Bournemouth University, writes about the different types of eating disorder and where local people can go to get vital information and support. [Read more](#)

Free online support for people living with a long-term physical or mental health condition

Managing long-term physical or mental illness can be stressful, tiring and lonely, even at the best of times. Life during lockdown has made this even tougher. The HOPE programme South West is now offering free online courses to help people to cope better, feel more in control of their emotions and be more resilient. There are 10 six-



week courses running between March to September, with support from trained facilitators.

[Find out more and book your place here](#)

Volunteers needed to support carers in Dorset



PramaLife is looking for new volunteers to befriend or mentor carers living in Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole. If you enjoy talking to people and you are a good listener, get in touch with them to find out more, phone 01202 207329, email befriending@pramalife.org.uk or visit pramalife.org

Healthwatch England welcomes Health and Care White Paper

Healthwatch England has welcomed plans to strengthen health and care legislation and make major changes to the way the NHS is organised. Responding to proposals in the Health and Care White Paper (published 11 Feb), Imelda Redmond CBE, national director at Healthwatch England (pictured right) said:



"The Covid-19 pandemic has demonstrated how crucial it is that health and social care services work well together and so we need to build on that. Proposals to strengthen collaboration between services is a step in the right direction and can bring real benefits for patients, address the wider factors of health, and support people to live better, healthier lives. We support hundreds of thousands of people across the country every year to share their experiences and views of health and social care. We know the focus on integrating services will be well received by the public who want a more joined

up and personalised experience. And so, we particularly welcome the commitment to strengthen and assess patient voice at every level of the system – a crucial step towards helping everyone get the care they need, regardless of age, ethnicity and health conditions..."

[Read more](#) and find out about the new proposals to join up health and care services.

Speak up and help make health and social care better for you and your community

Healthwatch Dorset is the county's independent health and care champion. We exist to ensure that people are at the heart of care. Our dedicated team of staff and volunteers listen to what people like about local health and care services, and what could be improved. These views are then shared with the decision-making organisations in the county, so together we can make a real difference. We cover the geographical area of Dorset, which includes the unitary authority areas of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole and Dorset.



The **Healthwatch Dorset** service is run by Evolving Communities CIC, a community interest company limited by guarantee and registered in England and Wales with company number 08464602. The registered office is at Unit 4 Hampton Park West, Melksham, SN12 6LH.



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