**TEMPLATE LETTER**

To: XXXXX

Cc: Clinical Commissioning Group

[DATE]

Dear colleagues,

**COVID-19 vaccination programme 2020/21**

We wrote recently to GP practices and commissioners outlining next steps for the COVID-19 vaccination programme, to be delivered in general practice through an Enhanced Service (ES)[[1]](#footnote-2). The large majority of GP practices have chosen to participate in the ES, in collaboration with other practices in a PCN Grouping.

Your PCN has general responsibility for your PCN Aligned Care Homes under the provisions of the Network Contract Directed Enhanced Service.

It is vitally important that all eligible patients who wish to be vaccinated have access to the COVID-19 vaccination.

Commissioners are taking steps to ensure that care home residents and staff of non-participating PCNs can be vaccinated elsewhere, including at local PCN Grouping Designated Sites. We have made arrangements for the residents and staff of your PCN Aligned Care Home[s] to be vaccinated by [Insert name and contact details of PCN Grouping or alternative provider].

You will be aware that in keeping with GPs’ overarching professional responsibilities, all practices have a wider *Duty of Co-operation[[2]](#footnote-3)* within their contracts. Any contractor who does not provide a particular enhanced service to their registered patients must:

* co-operate, insofar as is reasonable, with any person responsible for the provision of that service or those services; and
* comply in core hours with any reasonable request for information from such a person or from NHS England relating to the provision of that service or those services.

We are sure therefore that you will be able to co-operate fully with other practices, PCN Groupings and Commissioners to ensure that all patients have fair and equitable access to the COVID-19 vaccination programme.

**Measures to take**

GPs should use their professional judgement to ensure that their practices fulfil their contractual requirements. As a minimum, we would expect practices to:

* provide information to their PCN Aligned Care Homes about how they can access vaccinations (this information will be provided by the commissioner), and keep that information up to date; and
* provide any reasonable information about your PCN Aligned Care Homes to PCN Groupings or Commissioners, compliant with data protection law and guidance, which may be required for the delivery of the COVID-19 vaccination programme. This may include information and contact details of patients eligible for vaccination who the commissioner wishes to contact directly.

It is also important that you receive further updates on key programme developments, even if your practice is not participating in the ES. Please ensure you have signed up to receive the [NHSE/I Primary Care Bulletin here](https://www.england.nhs.uk/email-bulletins/primary-care-bulletin/).

Finally, of course we recognise the significant workload that all practices are managing. Thank you for your ongoing work in this area as well as for your help in delivery of the COVID-19 vaccination programme.

1. 1 December 2020 letter and specification: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/covid-19-vaccination-programme/primary-care-guidance/> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. This duty of co-operation is established in GMS & PMS Regulations as well as APMS Directions, and is included in all standard GMS, PMS and APMS contracts [↑](#footnote-ref-3)