

## ***SAIF's Coronavirus (Covid-19) update 20.09.21***



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#### **All UK nations**

#### **Vaccine booster campaign update**

SAIF members may have seen the news that a vaccine booster campaign is to be rolled out this autumn for certain groups, including frontline health and social care workers and anyone over the age of 50. The JCVI (Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation) issued a statement last week outlining the booster programme and this can be found [here](#). Crucially, the JCVI advises that the booster jab should not be given any earlier than six months after the completion of the primary vaccine course (i.e. two doses).

SAIF is pleased to see confirmation in Public Health England's [updated Green Book](#) that funeral operatives remain among those grouped under 'frontline health and social care workers' (see pages 22 and 16) and are therefore eligible for a booster jab this autumn regardless of their age. With the first injections being offered this week, SAIF advises members to apply via the same channels they used during the primary vaccination phase.

## England

### Autumn and winter Covid response published

The Government has published its [plan](#) for managing coronavirus during the autumn and winter of 2021/22. Although there are contingency plans which could result in the mandating of certain behaviours, such as wearing masks and working from home, the primary plan aims to navigate the winter through vaccine-driven immunity, antivirals and therapeutics, and testing and isolating positive cases. Businesses are also given the following advice:

- a. Ask employees to stay at home if they are feeling unwell.
- b. Ensure there is an adequate supply of fresh air to indoor spaces. Businesses should identify any poorly ventilated spaces, for example by using a CO2 monitor, and take steps to improve fresh air flow in these areas.
- c. Provide hand sanitiser to enable staff and customers to clean their hands more frequently, and clean surfaces which people touch regularly.
- d. Display an NHS QR code poster for customers to check in using the NHS Covid-19 app, so they are alerted if there's an outbreak and can take action to protect others.
- e. Consider using the NHS Covid Pass.

Please note that businesses must not ask employees to come to work if they have been asked to self-isolate.

SAIF members may also find [this guidance](#) useful as it provides information as to how Covid-19 spreads, with airborne transmission a significant cause of infection.

## Wales

### **Action card for places of worship and funerals**

The Welsh Government has republished the coronavirus [action card](#) for places of worship and funerals. Action cards form part of the government's core guidance following the lifting of restrictions this summer and are designed to advise on reasonable steps to take to prevent infections. The places of worship and funerals action card includes suggested measures including venue ventilation, singing mitigations and preventing crowding.

### **Scotland**

#### **Baseline measures remain in place**

The Scottish Government reminds businesses of a number of [baseline measures](#) that remain in place in Scotland as part of efforts to reduce the spread of coronavirus. These are:

1. face coverings must be worn in all the same indoor settings and continue to be required on public transport (unless exempt);
2. hospitality and entertainment venues are required to collect the contact details of customers so that Test and Protect can continue to contact-trace positive cases;
3. as before, businesses, services providers and places of worship must have regard to Scottish Government guidance about measures to minimise risk of exposure to Covid-19 relating to their business, service or premises; and
4. organisers of outdoor events of more than 5,000 people outdoors and 2,000 people indoors will still require local authority permission before they can go ahead, as this will allow us and local authorities simply to be assured of the arrangements in place to reduce the risk of large scale gatherings.

For the funeral sector, collecting contact details for Test and Protect remains strongly advised - this measure forms part of the national effort to suppress Covid-19, and supports the country to return to a more normal way of life.