

Jeane Freeman MSP
Cabinet Secretary for Health and Sport
By email

19 January 2021

Dear Cabinet Secretary

Training for Covid vaccinators

Dentists across Scotland have signalled their enthusiasm to take part in the Covid vaccination programme but colleagues are being put off participating due to the onerous and time-consuming training required to become a vaccinator.

I have set out in the Appendix to this letter my personal experience of the training, including the unnecessary elements and obstacles I faced, and some suggestions for improvement. As experienced medical practitioners, dentists are fully capable of delivering vaccines and while I acknowledge that some training is required (especially as the vaccines are new), the current training programme is overly complicated and bureaucratic.

While there may be limiting factors to delivering the vaccine to the people of Scotland, such as vaccine supplies, the roll-out of the vaccination programme should not be undermined by the number of vaccinators available to deliver the jabs. The [UK Health Secretary has committed to reduce the bureaucracy faced by vaccinators](#) and we urge the Scottish Government to do likewise.

I look forward to hearing from you soon and would be happy to discuss these issues with you.

Yours sincerely,



David McColl
Chair, Scottish Dental Practice Committee
British Dental Association

cc. Minister for Public Health, Sport and Wellbeing

cc. Chief Dental Officer

Appendix

Training

1. The TURAS vaccinator modules were unnecessarily arduous.
 - a. The Pfizer/AZ PowerPoint presentations and the associated live Q&A sessions with the vaccine leads that were put on were more than enough for qualified dental practitioners.
2. Ideally, the **pre-application** training would be streamlined to:
 - a. A self-declaration that the relevant Pfizer/AZ vaccine presentations have been attended/viewed
 - b. A self-declaration that ME and BLS (and therefore anaphylaxis) training has been undertaken in the last 12 months
3. The **post-application** training could build on this to include:
 - a. Instructional video on drawing up the vaccine
 - b. Instructional video on injection site/technique
 - c. Instructional video on using the patient logging portal (this already exists and is very good)

Applying

1. The application process was far too bureaucratic. The current system has been designed as a one-size-fits-all process, but without any real understanding as to how dental independent contractors currently work with the Health Board. The 'proof' of eligibility should only need to be:
 - a. A GDC registration number, evidencing qualification and status
 - b. A GG&C (NHS Board) dental list number, which evidences PVG and immunisation status
 - c. Self-declaration that the above 'stream-lined' pre-application training has been undertaken.
 - d. HR form (and personal risk assessment)
2. It would be useful to be able to access the staff bank but have the option to be paid via our NHS dental schedules rather than the PAYE system for staff bank employees. As we have discussed, PAYE has significant tax implications for the largely self-employed contractor base.
3. Before applying, potential applicants should be given a clear description of the process e.g. information on:
 - a. How many more vaccinators are required (and therefore whether it is worthwhile going through this lengthy process at this time)
 - b. Approval process for eligibility (how and when)
 - c. GG&C payroll process (how and when)
 - d. What further training will be given/required
 - e. Details of how to use the staff bank website, the rules of engagement (eg changing shifts, commitment, payment etc)
 - f. Induction process (On the job training? ID etc)

Starting the job?

1. I sent all the application materials on 31st December and was subsequently left in communication limbo
2. 12th January I received a login and password for the staff bank with no contextual information. I wasn't sure whether I had been approved but I logged in and booked a shift to see if that generated further information. It did not.

3. I now have a shift in a week's time at the Louisa Jordan and I do not know anything more.
 - a. I don't know where to go
 - b. I don't know who to speak to
 - c. I don't know what to wear
 - d. I don't know what ID I need or how to acquire it
 - e. I don't know if I will receive some sort of Tell Show Do introduction (I certainly will need one!)
 - f. I don't know who I'd contact if there was a problem (e.g. If I have to isolate after a contact)
4. I could theoretically book a shift the next day and still be none the wiser.
5. I don't know how to claim payment, whether this happens automatically, who I would contact about this

For me, the main reason for applying was so that I can contribute to the overall effort, but I can see how many dentists might be put off trying to apply. I also applied so that I could understand the process and help constituents via the GG&C LDC communications that I am responsible for. Solutions to all of the above issues will certainly help with that.

I am more than happy to get involved and help streamline this process as, in its current state, it is entirely obstructive.