

11th February 2021

Dear Member,

COVID-19 Vaccinations

There has been a great deal of coverage in the press regarding the rollout of vaccinations in care homes and it is fitting that our sector, which has worked so hard during the pandemic, is at the front of the line. The Government report that all care home in England have now been offered the first vaccination to all staff and patients. We know, however, that there still exists some reluctance amongst staff to have the vaccination. And whilst it is the right of everyone to decide for themselves whether or not to have the vaccine we would urge all staff members to have it.

Professor Deborah Sturdy is the Chief Nurse for Social Care and in her recent article "[Vaccination offers real hope](#)" on 1st of February 2021, says: *"It is vital everyone who can take up the offer of vaccination does so when their turn comes, to protect them from becoming seriously ill. I have had my first dose and will be taking up my second in the next few months. To those of you who may be cautious about getting vaccinated, I would urge you to speak with your colleagues and any trusted health experts about your concerns. There is plenty of helpful information on our [CARE Workforce App](#), which will help to answer any questions you might have."*

"We know the hard times are not over yet. But as more and more people are vaccinated, there really is light at the end of the tunnel for us all."

There is a wealth of information available on the COVID-19 vaccine from a variety of sources and judging the validity and accuracy of it is ever the challenge. Turning to expert or professional sources will often lead in the right direction. The Royal College of Nursing (RCN) posted an article online just before the vaccines began to be used saying: *"Vaccines have proved themselves to be among the most effective public health measures available for controlling diseases. Not only has smallpox been eradicated globally due to vaccination, but as of August this year, Africa is polio free with the infection remaining in just two countries as the global polio vaccination programme continues."*

Vaccine safety is always the most important consideration in vaccine acceptance decisions - it is understandable that there may be concern about the safety and effectiveness of a novel vaccine. While we wait for a vaccine to become available we can use this interval efficiently by reassuring the public that although vaccines are being quickly developed, no part of the usual development or regulatory process has been omitted."

If you, or your staff, have any concerns or hesitations about receiving the vaccine then we strongly urge them to talk them over with colleagues, or to read the many FAQs and other supporting documents within the communications toolkit on our website in the [Coronavirus](#) section.

Please make every effort to persuade as many of your staff as possible to take up the offer of the vaccine in order to help us all keep those vulnerable people we care for as safe as possible.

Keep safe and well.

Ian Turner, RNHA Executive Chairman

