

Covid-19

----- Guidance for practices



Date: 05.01.2021

Please be aware that this is a rapidly evolving situation.

Covid-19 vaccination consent guide and checklist

Background

This guidance is not intended to be an exhaustive guide to obtaining consent for the Covid-19 vaccination, rather it is intended to provide a guide to the types of issues that should be addressed in the context of the consent process.

The Covid-19 programme is unprecedented in its nature and extent, and has had widespread media coverage. Practices should expect the majority of patients to know about it prior to being invited for their vaccination and attend willingly. However, that does not detract from the fact that they need to receive the vaccination having provided informed consent.

Other resources

- Londonwide LMCs' resource for all matters relevant to the administration of the Covid-19 vaccination can be found [here](#) and the section relevant to the consent issues can be [found here](#).
- Principles in relation to taking consent can be found within the (recently updated) [GMC guidance](#).
- The GMC have issued further guidance specifically in relation to the Covid-19 vaccination, in the form of a [frequently asked questions page](#).
- The NHS has produced information and guidance for those receiving the Covid-19 vaccination on what to expect afterwards as a [webpage](#) and a [PDF leaflet](#).
- Our guidance for clinicians in relation to the indemnity issues can be [found here](#).

Overarching principles

This guidance relates to patients who have capacity and the overriding obligation is summarised in paragraph 10 of the above-mentioned GMC guidance, which states (the emphasis is added):

*You **must** give patients the information they **want** or **need** to make a decision*

Consent (which must be given free of any coercion) can be given in the following ways:

- Implied consent (for example; the patient responds to an invitation for the Covid-19 vaccination, attends the appointment and facilitates the administration of the vaccination [by rolling-up their sleeve etc]).
- Express consent, which could take the following forms:
 - Verbal.
 - Written (**please note that there is no absolute obligation to take written consent prior to the administration of the Covid-19 vaccination**).

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It is important to remember that even if consent is provided in any or all of the above ways it does not mean in itself that the patient has been provided with the *information they want or need to make a decision*.

In the event that a patient makes a *failure to warn* allegation it is important to be able to demonstrate that they were provided with the best available information (at the time of the vaccination) that they wanted or needed to make their decision to proceed with the Covid-19 vaccination.

It is important to remember that any *failure to warn* will be judged by the standards of the prevailing climate at the time, which in this case is a vaccination programme of unprecedented scale, rolled out at short notice. It is nevertheless important to have robust procedures in place to ensure that they have been provided with all the *information they want or need to make a decision* and that this can be demonstrated should the need arise.

In terms of the *information they want or need to make a decision*, the following matters should be borne in mind:

- You should rely on nationally agreed guidance and information (such as that that is linked in section entitled *other resources* above), wherever possible.
- You should be aware that the guidance and information may change hence the patient should be provided with the most up to date guidance and information at the time and there should be a way of recording what version of the guidance and information was provided.
- The *information they want or need to make a decision* may vary depending on the patient's individual circumstances and/or medical condition.
- Patient's questions should be answered by someone with the appropriate knowledge and expertise.

Covid-19 vaccination consent checklist

It is important that prior to the administration of the Covid-19 vaccination, the patient has *information they want or need to make a decision* to proceed with the vaccination.

The information can be derived from a number of sources of varying repute (which include but would not be limited to the media, written information, online information, discussions with friends, discussions with healthcare professionals) – it is important to remember that consent is a process and is not confined to a single conversation immediately prior to the administration of the Covid-19 vaccination.

The checklist below is intended to capture the themes of what could be covered in the consent process and is not intended to provide the detail as to the nature and extent of the information that should be provided. It can be utilised alongside the [Public Health England adult consent form](#).

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COVID-19 Vaccination Consent Checklist

Surname:	First name:
NHS number (if known):	Date of birth:

1. The patient identification has been verified.	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. The patient does not have any contraindications to receiving the vaccination.	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. The patient is aware of the benefits of the vaccination (which in short would be immunity to Covid-19).	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. The patient is aware of the limitations of the vaccination (for example – immunity not being achieved).	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. The patient is aware of the requirement for a second Covid-19 vaccination (including the timeframes and the practical issues that surround its administration).	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. The patient is aware of the (currently known) risks and side effects associated with the Covid-19 vaccination.	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. The patient has received, read and understood any correspondence and/or patient information leaflets that have been sent to them (and if so, there is a record of the versions that have been sent).	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. The patient has been provided with information that may be material to the decision to proceed with the vaccination based on their specific circumstances or condition.	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. The patient has had any questions addressed by someone with the appropriate knowledge and expertise.	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. The patient has been provided with the relevant <i>aftercare</i> advice.	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. If written consent is to be sought, the patient has signed and dated the consent form?	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. The above issues have been recorded to the correct patient record?	<input type="checkbox"/>

The patient has consented to a course of COVID-19 vaccination	
Checklist completed by	
Clinician Name	
Clinician Signature	
Date	

[Download this checklist as a Word document.](#)