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HR Directors
Immunisation Leads
Immunisation Planning Leads
Directors of Dentistry
Optometric Advisers

Dear Colleagues

Diversifying the Covid-19 Vaccinations Workforce: Proactive Recruitment and Training of Independent Contractor Groups & Streamlining Training and Induction

As discussed with Board Chief Executives and Chairs, to reduce pressure on your frontline services, we are now requiring that you take all possible steps to diversify the vaccinations workforce as much as possible. In doing so, we now require you to take forward the following actions:

1. You are required to register, within your staff bank, all independent contractors (dentists and optometrists) working within your board area who wish to participate in the Covid-19 vaccinations programme, in order that they are capable of being immediately deployed.
2. In registering contractors with the bank, you are required to ensure that all contractors have access to and have completed Covid-19 vaccinations training. Some contractors, given their extant clinical experience and regular use of vaccinations, will only require to undertake training in the specific characteristics of the Covid-19 vaccinations.
3. Board Dental and Optometrist leads are required to write by close of business on Friday 22 January to all independent contractors in the board area, confirming the following:
 - That the board is proactively registering independent contractors with its staff bank.
 - That contractors wishing to participate in the Covid-19 vaccinations programme will be directed to undertake appropriate training, in line with the [Covid Vaccination Pathway](#) and local governance arrangements. You are also requested to highlight that the training is based on materials issued by Public Health England and is materially similar in all 4 UK nations.
 - How you will contact contractors to offer sessions, including setting out that as pace of delivery and supply permits, sessions in vaccinations clinics will be offered over the next 6 months.
 - How practice staff should register their interest – either via the board bank or by directing them to local recruitment for vaccinators within your board, or both.
 - A point of contact within the board (either the Dental or Optometrist Lead, an HR Representative, or an appointed deputy) who can answer questions and engage directly with the Immunisations Workforce Lead to resolve queries.

- That contractors will receive further clear instructions upon being deployed, including details of who they are to report to, any necessary induction

In addition to the above specific actions regarding the Independent contractor workforce, we also now require you to undertake the following actions to ensure that training, induction and onboarding process for the vaccinations workforce is as streamlined and effective as possible:

1. Contractors with experience of delivering vaccinations should be required only to undertake the Covid-19 specific vaccinations training.
2. Contractors working on a sessional basis, and newly recruited vaccinations staff, should only be required to undertake induction training that is essential to ensuring they can work safely in a vaccinations environment.
3. Necessary statutory or induction training that is predominantly about the clinical operating environment within which vaccinations are being delivered, should be covered by using tools such as pre-clinic huddles, for maximum effectiveness and to minimise training time. This might include, for example, fire safety.
4. Where appropriate, staff with prior experience (such as emergency registrants and independent contractors), can be given the option to self-certify that they have completed generic training modules.
5. Where individuals, such as contractors, have a prior relationship with the board, and proxy information can be used (such as GDC registration or a board list number) to evidence that the individual would satisfy relevant pre-employment checks, this proxy information should be used to make the process as efficient as possible.

We will require a return from you, as part of the weekly Management Information return, that confirms the number of independent contractors you have added to your staff bank, no later than close of business (17:00) on Tuesday 02 February 2021. In addition to this, you are asked for a copy of your on-boarding and training pathway with expected timelines with regards the outstanding training for IC groups covered in this letter, as well as the on-boarding and training pathway and expected timelines for new staff recruited into your service as vaccinators (registrant workforce and Health Care Support Workers).

Yours sincerely

Stephen Lea-Ross

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Deputy Director