



July 2021

Dear Constituent,

Thank you for contacting me about health and social care workers receiving the COVID-19 vaccine.

Over the course of the pandemic, around 90% of those who died from COVID-19 in this country were people over 70. It is therefore crucial that those working in close proximity to older people are vaccinated against the virus.

The Social Care Working Group of SAGE has advised uptake rates of 80% in staff and 90% in residents in care home settings are needed to provide a minimum level of protection against further outbreaks. At present, a significant proportion of care homes in England are not meeting this threshold.

For this reason, the Government is now taking steps to require care providers to deploy only staff who have been vaccinated within older adult care homes. This measure will protect the people most at risk in our society and follows extensive consultation with care home staff, providers, residents, and families.

With regards to the legality of mandatory vaccinations for care home staff, it is already lawful for a care home to dismiss unvaccinated front-line staff, provided that certain conditions have been complied with.

All care homes have an overriding duty of care to vulnerable residents, and in the current context, are entitled to make vaccination a condition of continuing employment.

The new legislation will mean that anyone working in a CQC-registered care home in England for residents requiring nursing or personal care must have two doses of a COVID-19 vaccine unless they have a medical exemption.

It will apply to all workers employed directly by the care home or care home provider (on a full-time or part-time basis); those employed by an agency; and volunteers deployed in the care home. Those coming into care homes to do other work will also have to follow the new regulations.

The Government proposes that individuals will be exempt from the requirement if they have an allergy or condition that the Green Book lists as a reason not to administer a vaccine.

There will also be exemptions for those entering to assist with an emergency or carrying out urgent maintenance work; those under the age of 18; and clinical trial participants.



**Chris Heaton-Harris**

Member of Parliament for Daventry  
House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA  
Tel: 020 7219 7048

I understand that the Government intends to publish further guidance to describe, in more detail, the scope and process for granting exemptions, which will continue to be informed by the Green Book, and I look forward to studying this in due course.

Employers have a responsibility to ensure that information they hold on their employees is held in a way that protects their privacy. This includes any information they may hold relating to an employee's medical history and any disclosure of this should only be with the permission of the individual concerned.

The measures are subject to Parliamentary approval and then a 16-week grace period. I can assure you that I will be scrutinising the proposals closely when they come before the House.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Chris'.

**CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP  
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR DAVENTRY**