

Oxfordshire

NHS & Local Authorities Stakeholder Briefing

22 July 2022

Oxfordshire health and local authority partners are working together to help the county restart, recover and renew after COVID-19.

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Remember simple precautions after rise in COVID cases

People in Oxfordshire are being reminded to follow simple COVID precautions in response to the county – and country as a whole – currently going through another phase of rising cases of COVID-19.

Case numbers in the county doubled during the second half of June, with a new sub-variant of Omicron thought to be one of the chief drivers of the rises being seen in Oxfordshire and elsewhere.

Ansaf Azhar, Oxfordshire County Council's Director for Public Health, advised people to stay at home if they felt unwell, but also to follow simple guidance to reduce the risk of COVID spreading, including ventilating indoor spaces and washing your hands. He warned that COVID-19 has not gone away and that we all need to play our part to live safely with the virus.

COVID vaccinations – best protection against serious illness

Appointments for COVID-19 vaccinations are available via the [national booking service](#) (or call **119** free) at various sites, including community pharmacies and the large vaccination centres.

COVID-19 vaccinations are an evergreen offer so anyone over the age of five who has not previously been fully vaccinated and wants a first, second, or booster dose can come forward at any time.

More than 1.7 million vaccinations have already been given in Oxfordshire since the programme began in December 2020 across GP led local sites, large vaccination centres, community pharmacies, local community venues, children's centres and via the Health on the Move mobile unit, which has supported specific communities and businesses.

Nearly 95 percent of over 50s in Oxfordshire have had a booster dose, while 82 per cent of people aged 75 and over have received a second (Spring) booster. Vaccination rates among children aged 5-11 are currently at 18 per cent in Oxfordshire, compared with just over 10 percent nationally.

The Government has announced that a further booster jab will be offered to people aged 50 and over in the autumn, together with a flu jab.

The Oxford Health NHS FT vaccination team has been busy in recent weeks helping to complete the national Spring COVID [booster programme for the over-75s](#).

Small vaccination teams from the Trust have been travelling round the Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Berkshire areas calling in on housebound people who have been unable to go to a local centre to get their jab. There are three teams working out of Aylesbury, Oxford and Reading vaccination sites.

Since May they have vaccinated hundreds of people, including one person who is 107.

Then rise of COVID-19 cases is reflected in the rapidly increasing number of COVID-19 positive patients in the county's hospitals.

As of 7 July, 161 patients with COVID-19 were being treated at Oxford University Hospitals' four main hospital sites in Oxford and Banbury, compared to 52 patients on 21 June – a tripling of numbers in a fortnight.

Winter Access Fund

An evaluation of the Winter Access Fund has shown more than 76,828 additional GP appointments and 31,130 appointments with other healthcare professionals were made available to patients across Oxfordshire over winter 2021/22.

The county's Primary Care Networks and GP practices received £2m to increase the total number of appointments and the proportion of face-to-face appointments

Compulsory face mask wearing in all hospital clinical areas reintroduced

To keep patients, visitors and staff safe, compulsory face mask wearing by patients and visitors in all clinical areas on all OUH hospital sites was reintroduced on 6 July with immediate effect.



Mask wearing by patients and visitors in public areas of hospitals, for example corridors and cafes, is not compulsory but is advised and encouraged.

More information is available on the [OUH website](#).

Oxford Health NHS FT has reintroduced mask wearing in all clinical areas. This includes all wards, minor injury and first aid units, outpatient clinics and out of hours services.

People must not visit hospitals if they have flu-like symptoms, COVID-19 symptoms, or feel unwell. All visitors will be expected to wash their hands/use alcohol gel upon entry and leaving the ward area.

Patients can receive up to two visitors for at least one hour per day or longer if acceptable to the ward.

Patients may have more than two visitors when meeting in the ward garden, subject to arrangement. More details are on the [Oxford Health website](#).

Urgent and Emergency Care update

Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and the wider Oxfordshire health and care system both reached OPEL 4, and South Central Ambulance Service (SCAS) declared a critical incident from Monday 11 to 14 July.

Everyone pulled together to achieve greater integration and improvements across the emergency pathways.

The number of patients assessed in their own homes has increased due to more people being referred from 999 into the Urgent Care Response (UCR) and Hospital at Home services. Discharge to assess from the Emergency Departments is also

being developed to support patients having their care assessment at home instead of in hospital.

The Care Home Support Service (CHSS) is supporting people who are referred from Oxfordshire beds to interim care home beds while care homes which are facing challenges are identified and referred to the CHSS to see what additional support they require.

Health and care partners have used the media and social media to spread messages about staying safe and well during the exceptionally hot weather. Ansaf Azhar, Director of Public Health at Oxfordshire County Council, was on BBC Radio Oxford, while SCAS filmed videos on water safety.

The considerable joint working has developed solutions that have led to improvements in patient flow, and the pressures have eased slightly.

OUH Chief Executive Officer update

Professor Meghana Pandit (OUH Chief Medical Officer) took up her role as Interim Chief Executive Officer on Friday 1 July after Professor Bruno Holthof stepped down from his post as CEO for the period between Bruno leaving OUH and a new substantively appointed CEO joining the Trust.



At the Trust Board and Council of Governors meeting on Wednesday 13 July, it was agreed to appoint Meghana (pictured above) as CEO on a fixed term basis for the next 12 months until 30 June 2023.

OUP Chair, Professor Sir Jonathan Montgomery said her appointment would ensure stability and an opportunity for Meghana to take ownership of a key leadership role while the recruitment process continues.

Professor Pandit said she looked forward to working with colleagues at OUP and partners in the health and social care system in Oxfordshire and across the new Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care System.

Dr Anny Sykes has been appointed as Interim Chief Medical Officer while Meghana is CEO. She has been a Consultant in Respiratory Medicine at OUP, specialising in lung cancer, since 2013.

New measures to support OUP staff during the Cost of Living crisis

The Trust Board at OUP is aware of challenging times for many members of its OneTeamOneOUP due to financial pressures created by price inflation, rising energy costs, and other cost of living factors which can cause anxiety and stress.



While the Board cannot give staff a pay rise to keep pace with the increasing cost of living, as salary levels are set nationally, other measures have been implemented to support staff and a joint working group has been set up with trade unions to explore further measures.

All staff received a £100 cost of living bonus in April and now an initiative to support staff with their travel to work costs has been launched.

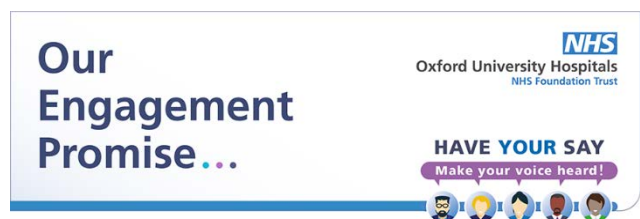
A £250 transport voucher is available to every member of staff – for example, to discount the cost of an annual bus pass or to buy a new bike through the Cycle2Work scheme – and staff car parking on our hospital sites will remain free until at least the end of August.

Staff engagement programme launched at OUP

Encouraging as many staff as possible to have their say and make their voice heard by taking part in the annual NHS Staff Survey is a priority at OUP.

Hearing what is working well for people and what could be better means that, together, staff can make OUP a great place to work. The NHS Staff Survey response rate has increased by almost 20 per cent in the last five years, to 57 per cent in 2021.

Following the publication of the latest results in March 2022, OUP is focusing on four key areas – staff health and wellbeing; equality, diversity and inclusion; bullying and harassment; violence and aggression.



The Trust's *Our Engagement Promise* campaign has been launched to ensure staff are part of the changes they want to see and feel. It focuses on different aspects of staff experience each month with online events and activities, learning sessions, and a website to share ways of working, resources and support – staff wellbeing is the focus in July.

OUP Radiotherapy Centre @ Swindon officially opened

On 22 June, patients and staff from OUP and Great Western Hospitals gathered to officially open the new OUP Radiotherapy Centre located on the Great Western Hospital site in Swindon – in advance of the centre opening to patients.



Two radiotherapy patients, Sandra McGlone and Fred Bassett, led the cutting of the ribbon alongside representatives from both hospitals.

The new OUH Radiotherapy Centre @ Swindon is an expansion of the Trust's existing radiotherapy service, currently provided solely from the Churchill Hospital in Oxford.

Jason Dorsett, OUH Chief Finance Officer, said the new facility will make an important difference to local cancer patients and their families. The reduction in travel time means less stress and anxiety and brings quality care closer to home.

Horton General Hospital turns 150

Staff at the Horton General took a couple of hours out of their day on Friday 15 July to celebrate as the Banbury hospital marked its 150th anniversary. The event, which also included volunteers, reflected on the excellent care provided at the hospital over the years.

BBC Radio Oxford featured Horton staff and teams as part of an all-day broadcast from the hospital on Monday 18 July.

Meanwhile, the OUH Women's Centre at the John Radcliffe Hospital has celebrated its 50th anniversary

The centre, which includes Maternity, Gynaecology and Neonatal services, saw Neonatal Unit staff gather on 6 July for a celebration event held at Ronald McDonald House (accommodation for parents of children and neonates in hospital) on the JR hospital site (see photo below).



Celebration events for staff working in other areas of the Women's Centre are due to take place during July.

Open Day showcases healthcare research

Hundreds of members of the public came to Oxford Town Hall on 5 July to find out about the latest healthcare research taking place in Oxfordshire.

The NIHR Oxford and Oxford Health BRCs – hosted by Oxford University Hospitals and Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust respectively – held a joint Open Day to showcase the research they support, how it benefits NHS patients, and how people can get involved in clinical trials.

There was an exhibition space with interactive stands, covering topics as diverse as genomics, obesity, cardiovascular health, breathlessness and virtual reality therapy for mental health, as well as talks on subjects including Long COVID.



Happy Birthday NHS!

Tuesday 5 July was a cause for celebration as the NHS marked its 74th birthday.

Colleagues from across [Oxford Health](#) entered into the spirit to celebrate alongside patients, service-users, community and friends.

Across the Trust people joined in the fun with a cup of tea, a slice of birthday cake and a song and at community hospitals in Abingdon, Witney, Didcot and Wallingford there were special entertainment performances, art and fundraising.



At OUH, Professor Sir Jonathan Montgomery, Trust Chair, and Professor Meghana Pandit, the Trust's Interim CEO, wrote to all staff to thank them for being part of the OneTeamOneOUH.

They said: "Thank you for providing the best possible care for our patients and for your compassionate excellence in spite of the challenges facing us all, both professionally and personally. Thank you not only for your excellent care for our patients and their families and carers but also for caring and looking after each other, your teams and your wider staff networks in the Trust.



"Thank you to our wonderful volunteers and thank you to Oxford Hospitals Charity for working tirelessly alongside us in the Trust to support staff. And finally, thank you to those who make it possible for us to do our jobs including other keyworkers such as teachers and nursery staff, and our partners and families."

Hospital Trusts awards round-up

- Staff from the Haematology team at the Churchill Hospital were recently presented with the [Myeloma UK Clinical Service Excellence Programme Award](#), in recognition of their outstanding care for patients with myeloma, an incurable blood cancer.

- A project which helps parents and carers of children with complex medical conditions is shortlisted in two categories of the *Health Service Journal (HSJ)* Patient Safety Awards. This collaboration between Oxford University Hospitals, the University of Oxford, Helen & Douglas House Hospice and Oxford Simulation Teaching and Research (OxSTaR), is a finalist in the 'Service User Engagement and Co-production' and 'Patient Safety Education and Training' categories. Winners will be announced in September.
- OUH received three Gold (winners) awards and a Silver (runner-up) award at the [Internal Communications and Engagement \(ICE\) Awards 2022](#) on 6 July, in recognition of the work of the Trust's in-house Communications and Oxford Medical Illustration (OMI) teams throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The *Growing Stronger Together* staff wellbeing programme, which supports the mental health and wellbeing at OUH has been shortlisted in the 'NHS Employers Award for Wellbeing' category of the [Healthcare People Management Association \(HPMA\) Excellence in People Awards](#) – winners will be announced in September. The programme [won the 'Most Promising Organisational Development & People' category at Skills for Health's Our Health Heroes Awards in March 2022.](#)
- The HOPE (Healthy Outcomes for People with Eating disorders) Adult Eating Disorder Collaborative has been named the [national winner of the Excellence in Mental Health Award](#) at the prestigious NHS Parliamentary Awards 2022. The judges said the collaborative's results were hugely impressive to achieve weight restoration quicker and less time on inpatient wards. Readmission rates have been slashed by 75 per cent
- Dr Caz Nahman has been presented with an Exceptional People award by Oxford Health Lead Governor Mike Hobbs at Raglan House in Oxford. She has only been with the Trust since September 2021 but has made

an impact in that short time. Dr Nahman, a Consultant Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist, was nominated by colleague Dr Emma Fergusson for her [work](#) in caring for young people with eating disorders.

New videos on learning disability and epilepsy

Oxford Health has launched two new videos aimed at raising awareness of learning disabilities and autism.



The videos are co-produced with experts by experience from advocacy organisations My Life My Choice and Epilepsy Action. Watch the videos [here](#).

Celebrating peer support worker graduates

Another 43 [peer support workers](#) celebrated their graduation from Oxford Health's training programme recently at an event in Thame.

Although many of the graduates have already taken up roles in the Trust and have progressed in their careers, this was the first such celebration in two

years and, for many, the first time they had met each other in person.

Peer support workers use their own experience of mental health challenges to help others. Oxford Health has trained 86 peer support workers, and around 40 are in paid roles with the Trust, with plans to expand and diversify the programme.



Aspiring candidates first join the Trust as volunteers. They undertake a 12-day training programme and do volunteer placement. After a successful competition, they have an opportunity to follow a recruitment process for a paid role.

Community resilience

Cost of living help and support

Oxfordshire's councils have introduced additional support for residents to pay essential bills. The initiatives are funded through funds allocated to Oxfordshire County Council from the Government's Household Support Fund, which was extended by the Chancellor in the recent budget.

South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse district councils have opened a [voucher scheme](#) to support households who cannot afford to pay for life's essentials. West Oxfordshire District Council invited [applications for financial support](#) to those most in need of help with their energy bills. The scheme was

for residents who were not eligible for the recent £150 council tax energy rebate.

Advice is also available to residents who are struggling with rising costs. Oxford City Council is holding [drop-in advice events](#) in July; while the district, city and county councils all have guidance and advice on their websites:

[Cherwell District Council](#)

[Oxford City Council](#)

[Oxfordshire County Council](#)

[South Oxfordshire District Council](#)

Support to reduce utility bills

[Better Housing, Better Health](#) is a free service, supported by Oxfordshire County Council, which could save people money, make their living space more comfortable, reduce stress and improve their health.

The service provides practical advice on saving energy and accessing grants and financial support. Residents can fill in a [quick form](#) to access telephone support. In certain cases, a [home visit](#) may be offered to help identify ways in which people can cut costs by saving energy or accessing grants.



Some broadband providers offer cheaper packages for those who receive certain Government benefits. These are known as social tariffs. [Ofcom has a list of broadband providers who offer these packages](#). Residents are advised to check with their existing provider before starting any new contracts to make sure there are no charges for stopping their existing contract.

New website for tackling climate change in Oxfordshire

www.climateactionoxfordshire.org.uk lists measures people in Oxfordshire can take to reduce their carbon footprint and save energy, and rates them according to effort, impact and cost. It also gives people an idea of financial savings and includes tips and links on how to get started.

The website is a joint venture by Oxfordshire's six local authorities and OxLEP – the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership. The one-stop shop has sections aimed at individuals, communities and organisations, including businesses, and advice on transport, lifestyle, shopping, home and biodiversity matters.

Children Education and Families

Developing our vision for all children and young people in Oxfordshire

Following the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board multi-agency neglect challenge event in September 2021, it has been agreed to develop a shared 'vision strapline' for all services working with children in Oxfordshire.

The strapline should set a shared aspiration for all children in Oxfordshire, incorporate shared values and be recognised and used broadly across the county. It may lead to a promise and will be incorporated into the OSCB and Children's Trust Board branding.

The strapline will build on the [vision, values and statement of intent](#) which has been agreed for all strategies relating to children by the Children's Trust Board.

Please share this poll widely among those who work with children and families in the county and/or with children, young people, parents or carers. The poll is an opportunity to select the strapline that they feel best summarises our collective aspiration for, and commitment to, Oxfordshire's children, from the list provided.

To take part in the poll please follow this link: <https://forms.office.com/r/7Lpkmje0Me>

Head for the hub

Cherwell District Council's popular activity hubs programme will return this summer from Monday 25 July at venues in Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington.

Highlights include professional athlete mentors from the Youth Sport Trust, and guest coaches leading

sessions such as tennis, football and cricket. Swimming will also be offered at selected venues.

With support from the government's Holiday Activity Fund, the council can offer free places and food to children eligible for free school meals.

Oxfordshire Libraries' Summer Reading Challenge

This year's Summer Reading Challenge is celebrating science and innovation. It will see children team up with the Gadgeteers, a group of friends who love inventing.

The competition, which is held in partnership with the Reading Agency charity, encourages children to borrow and read any six library books over the summer. The challenge is a great way for children to keep up their reading skills and confidence over the summer holidays and prevent a holiday reading dip.

The challenge launched in the county's libraries on 9 July and will run until 10 September. To find out more, visit oxfordshire.gov.uk/summer-reading-challenge



Place, Transport, Infrastructure

Europe's most powerful EV charging hub opens in Oxford

Oxford City Council, Pivot Power, Fastned, Tesla Superchargers and Wenea have opened Europe's most powerful electric vehicle charging hub at Redbridge Park and Ride.

The charging hub, which will be powered entirely by renewable energy, will initially offer fast and ultra-rapid charging for 42 vehicles at once.



With 10 MW of installed capacity on site, the hub can scale up with EV adoption to provide charging for 400 vehicles, helping to support the estimated 36 million EVs expected on UK roads by 2040.

Consultation opens on making school streets safer

People are invited to have their say on permanent measures to restrict vehicle access to four school streets during school start and finish times to create a safer environment for walking or cycling to school.



Championed by Oxfordshire County Council, and supported by Sustrans, the school streets programme initially ran as a trial with nine schools last year. Following some great results from the trial, four of the participating schools now wish to make the school streets programme permanent from September 2022.

The participating schools are Larkrise Primary School, St Ebbe's Church of England Primary School and Windmill Primary School in Oxford, and

St Nicolas Church of England Primary School in Abingdon.

Campaign launched to encourage people back on board

A multi-partner communications campaign, led by Oxfordshire County Council, is running to highlight the financial advantage of taking a bus over a private vehicle.

With the cost of fuel at record levels, commuters can make significant savings by using buses rather than private vehicles, where practical.

The [campaign](#) is being delivered in partnership with the Oxford Bus Company, Thames Travel, Stagecoach and Oxford City Council.

- A return journey between Witney and Oxford via [Stagecoach](#) S1 five days a week achieves an annual saving of up to £2,230 compared to using a private vehicle.
- A return journey between Abingdon and the John Radcliffe Hospital via [Oxford Bus Company's](#) X3 service saves up to £2,318 per year compared to using a private vehicle



Combined parking and bus ticket offer to be trialled at park and rides

Park and ride services in and around Oxford are to trial a new combined parking and bus ticket, as part of a set of proposals to make services more attractive for customers and encourage a switch from car travel to help reduce traffic congestion.

Working together, Oxford City Council, Oxfordshire County Council, Oxford Bus Company and Stagecoach, have developed [a set of proposals](#) to make the park and ride services more attractive.

If approved, car drivers will be able to purchase a combined ticket which covers both parking and

return bus travel at a rate of £4 for a car with one driver and £5 for a car with two or more people.

Oxfordshire's first bus summit discusses future of public transport

Oxfordshire's [inaugural bus summit](#), which took place on 24 June, brought together a range of organisations to discuss how to improve public transport in the county.



The event at the Saïd Business School was attended by Layla Moran MP, and representatives from Oxfordshire's district, county and city councils, the bus operators and user groups, health services, universities, and local employers. Anneliese Dodds MP, who had proposed the summit, was unable to attend due to illness.

Issues up for discussion included fares, ticketing options, coverage, accessibility and ease of understanding of the bus network, journey speeds and reliability, image and public opinion. Industry experts were in attendance, while the audience included representatives from disability and young people's groups.

County council to use cameras to enforce traffic restrictions in Oxfordshire

Oxfordshire County Council has obtained government permission to use cameras to enforce traffic regulations, including stopping in yellow box junctions, illegal turns, and vehicle restrictions.

Automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) cameras will be fitted around specific locations in

Oxfordshire to improve safety, ease congestion and reduce inconsiderate and dangerous driving.

Economy

New business grant scheme announced for Oxfordshire's visitor economy

A new grant scheme, set to assist the recovery of Oxfordshire's visitor economy, was launched to the county's business community on 14 July at a special online event, led by OxLEP.

The [OxLEP Business-led Visitor Economy Grant Scheme](#) is part of a wider OxLEP Visitor Economy Renaissance Programme, which is being supported via the Government's Contain Outbreak Management Fund. The new scheme provides funds to eligible businesses, with grants ranging from £5,000 to £24,999 per business.

already worked with and supported over 550 Oxfordshire-based businesses



OxLEP announces extension of programme supporting SMEs and enterprises for social good

OxLEP Business [has announced the extension of its ERDF-funded eScalate programme](#), through to the end of April next year.

eScalate's high-quality programme has been delivered via a variety of one-to-one sessions – led by expert business advisors – webinars and workshops, as well as a peer-to-peer arm of the programme.

The programme – which supports Oxfordshire's small businesses to grow with a particular focus on accessing finance and investment readiness, as well as supporting enterprises for social good – has