

15th July 2021

An important message from Jyoti Atri Director of Public Health, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough

Taking the right steps forward for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough - continuing to do the right thing.

Dear Sir / Madam

On Monday evening the Prime Minister announced that we would be moving to Stage 4 on the roadmap from July 19th - with most restrictions being relaxed, the Government itself is continuing to promote all the practical ways people can keep themselves safe, recognising rates will continue to rise.

As the new Director of Public Health for both Cambridgeshire and Peterborough I wanted to share with you some key public health advice which I hope will help to keep your business operating safely, and your employees well and at work.

THE PANDEMIC IS NOT OVER. Cases are currently rising in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and expected to continue to do so for some while. A significantly lower proportion of our population is vaccinated compared to the East of England and National averages.

Most important is encouraging all your staff to get vaccinated. Vaccines are significantly reducing the link between infections and severe disease and death. You can check the most up to date list of places vaccinations are taking place at <https://www.cambridgeshireandpeterboroughccg.nhs.uk/news-and-events/latest-news/covid-19-national-vaccination-programme/>

The recent spread of the now dominant Delta variant is estimated to be 40- 80% more transmissible than the previously dominant Alpha variant.

So I would encourage you to continue to ask your staff to take twice weekly rapid lateral flow tests, and get a PCR test if this rapid test shows positive, or if they have symptoms. And to isolate if they are positive or a close contact of someone who is.

There are also clear benefits to continuing to do the right thing by following the following public health guidelines:

- Meeting in well-ventilated areas where possible, such as outdoors or indoors with windows open.
- Wearing a face covering where you come into contact with people you don't normally meet in enclosed and crowded spaces.
- Washing your hands with soap and water or using hand sanitiser regularly throughout the day.
- Covering your nose and mouth when you cough and sneeze.
- Staying at home if unwell, to reduce the risk of passing on other illnesses onto friends, family, colleagues, and others in your community.
- Considering the individual risks of employees or customers, such as clinical vulnerabilities and vaccination status.

Businesses should follow the principles set out in the **working safety guidance** (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19>). Employers still have a legal duty to manage risks to those affected by their business. This includes guidance for employees who may be clinically extremely vulnerable.

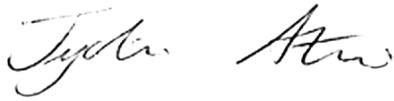
The way to do this is to carry out a health and safety risk assessment, including the risk of COVID-19, and to take

reasonable steps to mitigate the risks you identify.

While the government is no longer instructing people to work from home, a return to the workplace should be gradual and businesses should follow the published guidance.

You can use **PHE Guide** (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-vaccination-guide-for-employers>) and **Employer toolkit** (<https://coronavirusresources.phe.gov.uk/covid-19-vaccine/resources/employer-toolkit/>) to help support your staff and promote the vaccination programme.

Finally, it is really important to respect and be considerate of those (for example clinically vulnerable groups) who may wish to take a more cautious approach as restrictions are lifted.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jyoti Atri', written in a cursive style.

Jyoti Atri

Director of Public Health
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough