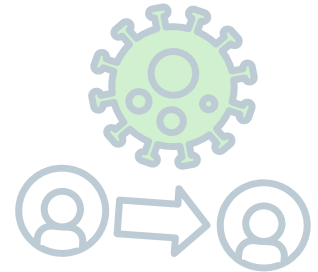


Consenting to the Covid-19 Vaccination: Guide for service users and their families

Why should I take the vaccine?

There is no treatment for any viruses. That is why vaccines are developed and the only prevention we have against them.

Covid-19 spreads easily, and can cause serious harm or death. Certain people, including those with underlying health conditions, are [more at risk](#) of being seriously ill. Having the vaccine will help protect us from this.



What should I expect when being offered the vaccine?

Everyone will be given the opportunity to be vaccinated against the coronavirus.

You may be invited to have your vaccination at a hospital, your GP surgery, a vaccination centre or a pharmacy. The vaccine is given as an injection into your upper arm. and you will need two appointments to get the two doses you need for longer lasting protection. The [NHS website](#) outlines what to expect at your appointment.

Some vaccine recipients may experience a painful heavy arm where they had the injection and may feel tired or have a mild fever for a couple of days. These are common side effects following vaccination.



Who makes the decision about whether I should have the vaccine?

You make the decision for yourself. You have the right to choose whether to have the vaccine or not and to be supported in making this decision.

If you are not sure about having the vaccine, people can support you to get more information, including your GP, Care provider, Nurse or other health professional. You can talk to them about your concerns or ask them questions.

There are also lots of resources available to help you make your decision including;

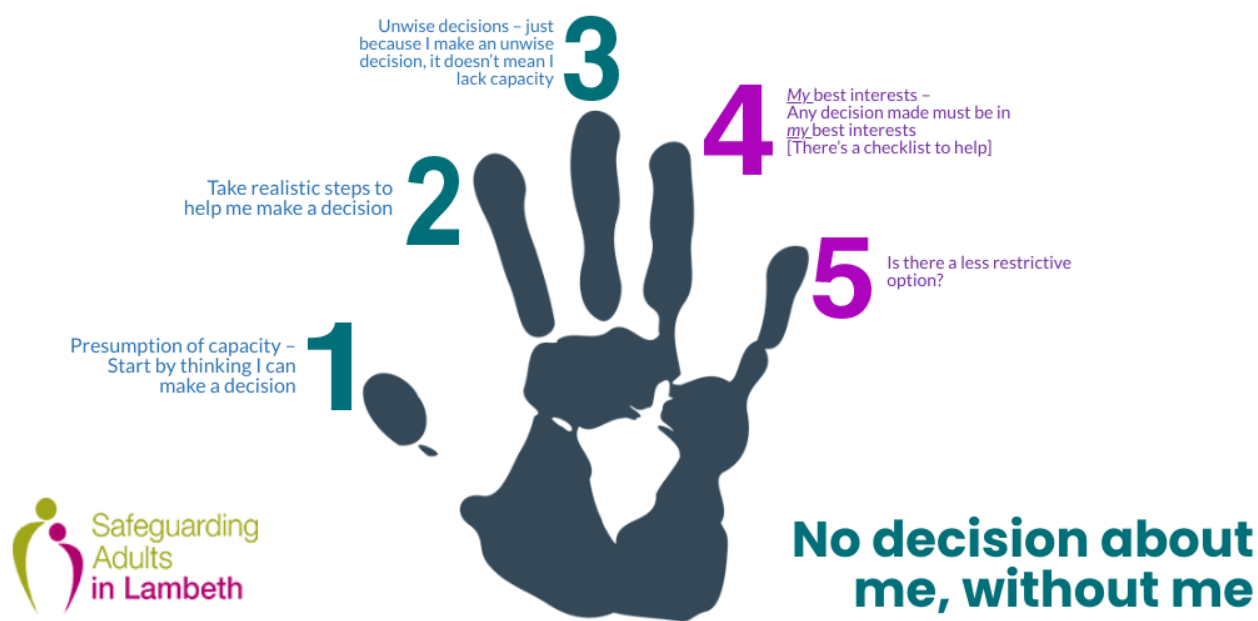
- [Information](#) from South East London CCG including information on priorities and safety
- A range of [leaflets](#) from Public Health England on vaccinations
- An [easy read guide](#) to vaccinations by Public Health England
- [Keep Safe](#) – an easy read photo story with sound
- Easy Read guidance from [Mencap](#) including answers to some [key questions](#)

What if I can't make this decision for myself?

Some people may be unable to make this particular decision for themselves, and are said to 'lack capacity'. Support workers, Family members and Health professionals will help to decide if the person should have the vaccine. There is a formal legal process that must be followed according to the Mental Capacity Act.

Any decision made on someone's behalf must be made in their 'best interests', taking into account the person's wishes, feelings, beliefs and values.

If the person has a known [Lasting Power of Attorney \(LPA\)](#) or [Court Appointed Deputyship](#) (for Health and Welfare decisions) then the LPA or Deputy will make the best interests decision. If there is no relevant LPA or Deputy, then the best interests decision-maker is the relevant healthcare professional.



What if family members disagree with professionals about whether their loved one should have the vaccine?

Any disagreements about what is in the person's best interests needs to be explored with all those involved to find out why there is an objection. For example, if the objection is related to someone being given the wrong information, then it may be helpful to provide up-to-date information and resources accordingly.

If the objection continues despite this, the relevance and rationality of the objection will be considered. It is the health professional who is the ultimate decision-maker. If the person has a history of always accepting vaccines, then family members cannot block them from having another type of vaccine. Some situations may need to go to the Court of Protection for a Judge to decide.

Where can I find more information about the Mental Capacity Act?

The Lambeth Safeguarding Adults Board has lots of information on its [website](#).

You can also access an easy-read version of this guide [by clicking here](#).