

## Latest Covid-19 News for Care & Support staff and customers



### **Extra testing in Smethwick area due to Covid-19 variant**

Extra Covid-19 testing is being carried out for people in specific areas of Smethwick/Cape Hill. This follows a case of the variant first discovered in South Africa being identified in the area.

Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council is strongly encouraging everyone aged 16 and over within specific streets in the Smethwick/Cape Hill area to take a PCR Covid-19 swab test.

This means everyone 16+ who does not have any Covid-19 symptoms - regardless of whether you have been vaccinated, if you are using rapid tests or if you have already had Covid-19 - needs to be tested.

For more information please visit the Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council website: Â

<https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/extrateesting>

## **Fraud Warning: COVID-19 Vaccine Fraud**

While many people have pulled together over the last year and excitement has grown over the opportunities of a new vaccine, it seems a few are using the roll-out process as a means of scamming innocent people. There have been reports of criminals fraudulently charging for vaccines and claiming to be NHS workers. We are sharing some information about these latest types of scams to help keep you informed and keep you safe from fraud.

In one scam, criminals are sending text messages saying that the recipient is eligible for the vaccine. The message asks you to follow a link to apply for an appointment - this will then take you to a fake NHS page requesting your personal details and a payment. Police are asking that individuals do not click on the link or respond to these messages.

There has also been a case where a criminal has visited a person's home and charged for a fake vaccine.

It's important to remember that the NHS will never charge for the vaccine and won't ask for personal information such as bills or credit and debit card details.

Â In order to protect yourself, please remember these quick tips:

- The NHS will never charge you for the vaccine.
- The NHS will never ask you for your bank account or card details.
- The NHS will never ask you for your PIN or banking password.
- The NHS will never arrive unannounced at your home to administer the vaccine.
- The NHS will never ask you to prove your identity by sending copies of personal documents such as your passport, driving licence, bills or pay slips. Â

Remember stay vigilant, stay safe, look after yourselves and look out for vulnerable friends and neighbours too. It is a positive time for everyone as the vaccine is rolled out across the country.

For more information on these scams and how to stay safe, then please visit the Action Fraud website:

<https://www.actionfraud.police.uk/alert/coronavirus-vaccine-scams-warning>

For more information about the vaccine, please visit the NHS website: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/coronavirus-vaccine/>

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