

The Elfrida Society is delighted to support Islington Learning Disability Partnership (ILDLP) and Islington CCG leading the way in vaccinating service users with learning disabilities through an innovative vaccination clinic and outreach programme

People with learning disabilities are six times more likely to die from COVID-19 infection. This startling statistic highlights the importance of vaccinating people with learning disability against COVID-19. Unfortunately, people with learning disabilities can face a range of barriers when it comes to getting their COVID-19 vaccination.

To tackle these barriers, Islington Learning Disabilities Partnership (ILDLP) teamed up with the Islington GP federation to create an innovative vaccination clinic for people with learning disabilities and their carers, one of the first of its kind in England.

A range of reasonable adjustments are offered, including telephone call bookings and reminders ahead of their appointments, allowing their carer to attend and be vaccinated alongside them, as well as accessible information on vaccines. The stewards on site are ILDP staff and advocates from Islington based charities Mencap and Elfrida. The appointments are longer than routine vaccine appointments and the vaccinators are ILDP clinical staff. In addition, those with needle phobia are offered desensitisation including a pre-appointment visit and a quiet room for their appointments.

The first clinic took place last week at the Bingfield Primary Care Centre and it was an overwhelming success. Martin (pictured) was very happy to receive his first vaccine dose. Martin felt less anxious having a familiar face administering his vaccination. Dr Niall O’Kane (Consultant Psychiatrist at ILDP) said, “we have excellent relationships with our Islington GP colleagues, who recognised the importance of ensuring reasonable adjustments and a tailored approach for people with learning disabilities and their carers”. Dr John McGrath (GP and LD health lead) said, “it’s amazing that this has come together so well- shared working is making sure we reach everyone in a setting that meets their needs”

Athena Mesaritis (ILDLP Pharmacist) and Mark Peacock (ILDLP Lead Nurse), both of whom led the organisation of the clinic both said “we are very thankful to all who helped to make this a great success, including the stewarding volunteers, our ILDP staff and GPs, and most of all, our service users and carers”. The feedback from service users and carers has been very positive including :

“I am very happy. My mum was able to come with me. I’m terrified of needles and wouldn’t have been able to do it without her”, and:

“I was nervous but the doctor (Tom) reassured me. He was really really good. Thanks for getting my mum (carer) in too.”

100% of the attendees rated their appointment as good, and 88% said they would recommend the clinic to friends and family.

Further clinics alongside an outreach home visit vaccine provisions are being scheduled in the upcoming weeks.

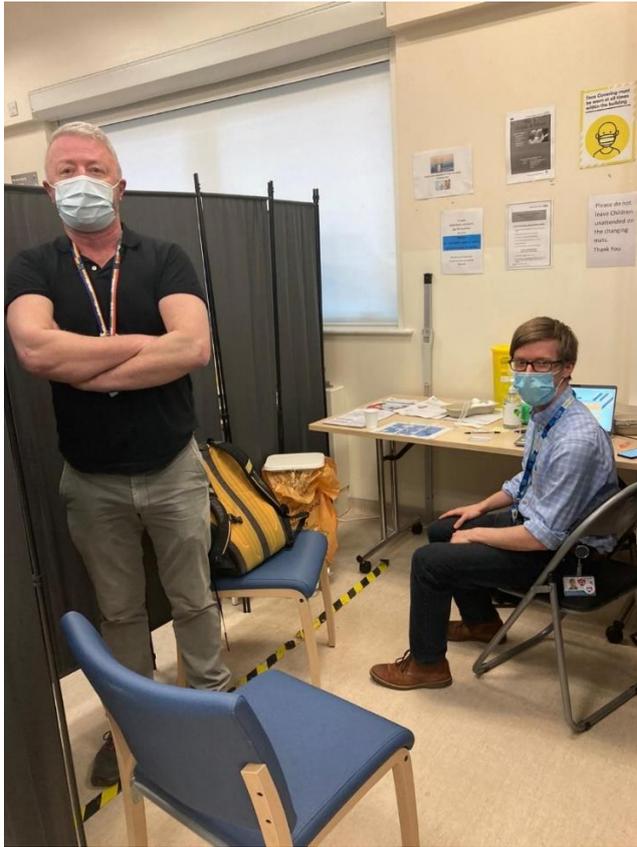
ILDLP would like to extend their gratitude and thanks to the Islington CCG and GP federation for their support and collaboration, including Dr John McGrath (Islington GP Clinical Lead for Mental Health), Liam Beadman (Islington Head of Primary Care Development) and Iman Shabam (Pharmacist, Islington Medicines Management Team)



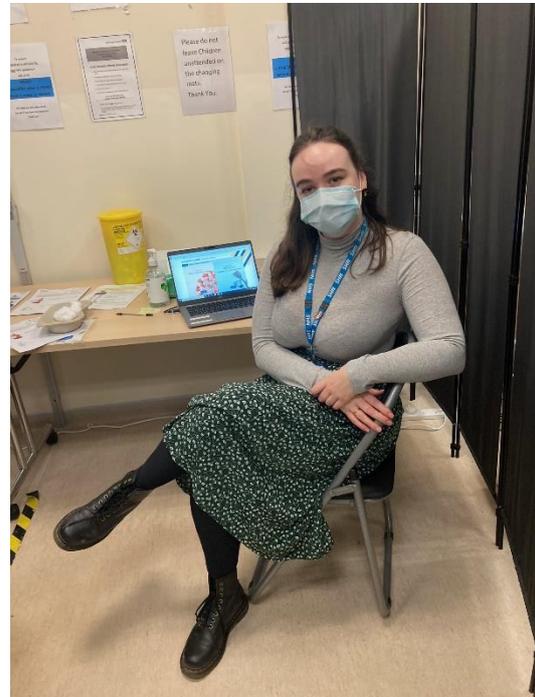
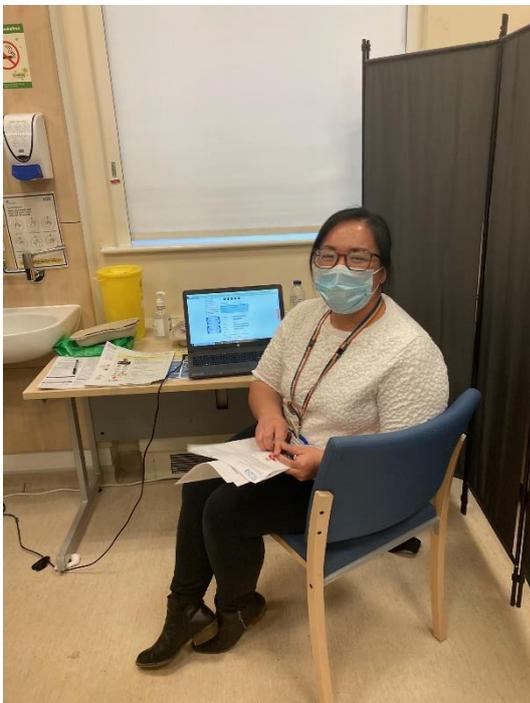
Millie Cooper, Elfrida Advocate (left) and Catherine McGowan, ILDP Occupational Therapist (right) who volunteered for stewarding and support



Martin Smith (left) who received his vaccination from Dr Niall O'Kane, ILDP Consultant Psychiatrist (right)



Mark Peacock, ILDP Lead Nurse (left) and Dr Thomas Elliott, Core Trainee Psychiatry Doctor (right) who were giving vaccines to service users and carers at the clinic



Ginalyn Calde, Nurse (left) and Jasmine Hackett, Speech and Language Therapist (right) both work at ILDP and volunteered to vaccinate at the clinic. Jasmine is new to vaccinating and trained during the pandemic



Kirsty MacKinnon, PA to Psychiatry (left) booked in people to the clinic and Kyri Theodorou (right) Brokerage and Quality assurance Manager was a volunteer steward



Jeremy Allerton, Intensive Outreach Support Worker (left) and Jonathan Quarterman Mencap (right), were stewards and collected feedback