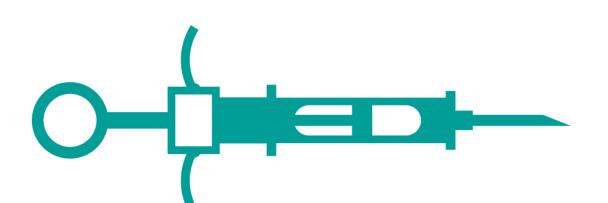




Your experience of the COVID-19 vaccination programme





Distribution List:

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Sunderland Echo

Joy Yates, Editorial Director Fiona Thompson, Senior Multi-Media Journalist

Executive Summary

In March 2021, Healthwatch Sunderland and Healthwatch South Tyneside launched a survey to gather people's general experiences of using their local COVID-19 vaccination programme.

This report covers those respondents who replied to the survey between the 3rd and 29th March 2021. We received a total of 306 surveys (278 from Sunderland patients and 28 from South Tyneside patients).

The purpose of this report is to share the findings with key NHS providers and commissioners, to help them identify what is working well and highlight those areas that need to be improved.

Key themes/findings

The survey was based on seven main sections. The main findings under each of the sections are as follows:

- Invitation to receive the vaccine The majority of Sunderland respondents received the invitation for their vaccine appointment via a text message or through their place of work. In comparison the majority of South Tyneside respondents received their invitation through their place of work or via a telephone call.
- **Booking of appointments** Overall, the vast majority of Sunderland and South Tyneside respondents found booking both their first and second vaccine either very easy or fairly easy. Those who rated it as difficult, in the main, commented on difficulties of finding available booking slots online when booking in their own appointments.
- Vaccine venue The majority of both Sunderland and South Tyneside respondents found getting to the venue for their vaccine either very easy or easy. A minority of respondents had difficulty getting to their vaccination venue because it was out of their local area and not signposted sufficiently.
- **Receiving the vaccine** The vast majority of patients in Sunderland and South Tyneside, felt safe in the venue whilst receiving their vaccine, received a vaccination card after their first and second vaccine, were informed of potential side effects and informed of which vaccine they were receiving. A few patients did comment that further explanation of potential side effects would have been helpful.
- Information to take away The majority of respondents for both Sunderland and South Tyneside received an information leaflet to take away with them and found the information contained very useful or useful. Some

patients did comment on issues with their leaflets such as the poor quality of the photocopy.

- Second vaccinations Overall the majority of Sunderland respondents didn't know when their second vaccine would be and this caused some patients concern. The vast majority of South Tyneside respondents were informed about their second vaccine.
- Overall experience Both Sunderland and South Tyneside respondents were very positive about their overall vaccine experience with many praising the staff involved in the whole process and the system as a whole. The few negative comments received, in the main were from Sunderland patients and related to lack of information given on their second vaccination i.e. when this was going to take place, how it would be booked and how they would get to know about it.

Next steps

The response to our survey to date has been incredible, we appreciate the time taken by all respondents who have shared their experiences with us so far.

We are sharing the feedback received with commissioners and key providers on a monthly basis for several months to come as the vaccination programme progresses. We are doing this in order to provide relevant information in a timely manner, so service providers can identify areas that are working well and those that may require further improvements.

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Introduction

What is Healthwatch?

Healthwatch is the independent local champion for people who use health and social care services. We are here to make sure that those running services put people at the heart of care.

By speaking to residents in our local area we aim to understand their needs, experiences and concerns of accessing and using local health and social care services. We can then speak out on their behalf to local service providers, focusing on people's concerns about current services and ensuring they are listened to and addressed by those who are running services.

We encourage and work with local services to involve local residents in the changes to health and social care provision. The ultimate aim is to get things right for the future, with health and social care services which meet the needs of the local community.



We champion what matters to you and work with others to find ideas that work.

We are independent and committed to making the biggest difference to you.



Findings

The findings in this section are based on responses to the survey. In total, there were 306 survey responses for the period of March 3rd to March 29th 2021.

The breakdown of these responses is:



Demographics

The demographic breakdown of those individuals who completed the survey for both areas is given below:

Gender



	Sunderland responses (278)		South Ty response	
Males	54	(19.5%)	5	18%
Females	220	(79%)	22	78%
Non-binary	0	(0%)	0	0%
Other	0	(0%)	1	4%
Prefer not to say	3	(1%)	0	0%
Skipped the question	1	(0.5%)	0	0

Age ranges

	Sunderland (278)	d responses	South Tyneside responses (28)		
18-24	2	1%	0	0	
25-34	22	8%	1	5%	
35-44	33	12%	6	21%	
45-54	68	24%	7	24.5%	
55-64	83	30%	7	24.5%	
65-74	52	18%	4	14%	
75+	17	6%	3	11%	
Prefer not to say	1	1%	0	0	

Ethnicity

	Sunder	rland	South Tyneside		
		ises (278)		ises (28)	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	
Arab	0	0%	1	3.5%	
Asian/Asian British: Bangladeshi	1	0.5%	0	0%	
Asian/Asian British: Indian	0	0%	1	3.5%	
Asian/Asian British: Pakistani	0	0%	0	0%	
Asian/Asian British: Chinese	1	0.5%	0	0%	
Asian/Asian British: Any other	0	0%	1	3.5%	
Asian/Asian British background					
Black/Black British: African	0	0%	0	0%	
Black/Black British: Caribbean	1	0.5%	0	0%	
Black/Black British: Any other	0	0%	1	3.5%	
Black/Black British background					
Gypsy, Roma or Traveller	0	0%	0	0%	
Mixed/ Multiple ethnic groups:	0	0%	0	0%	
Asian and White					
Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups:	0	0%	0	0%	
Black African and White					
White: British/English/ Northern	260	93%	23	82.5%	
Irish/Scottish/Welsh					
White: Irish	2	1%	1	3.5%	
White: Any other White	7	2.5%	0	0%	
background					
Another ethnic background	1	0.5%	0	0%	
I'd prefer not to say	3	1%	0	0%	
Skipped the question	2	0.5%	0	0%	

Are you currently pregnant or have you been pregnant in the last year?

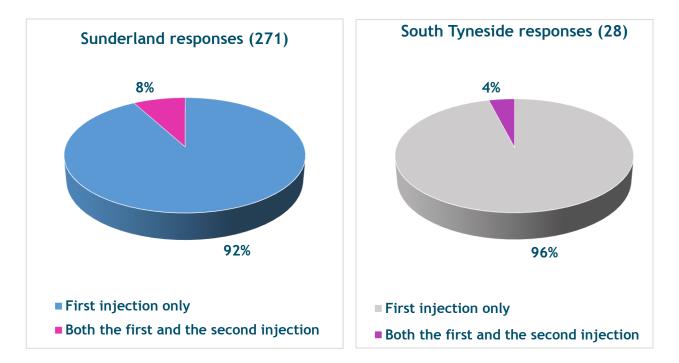
	Sunderland responses (274)	South Tyneside responses (28)
Yes	0.5%	0%
No	99 %	100%
I'd prefer not to say	0.5%	0%

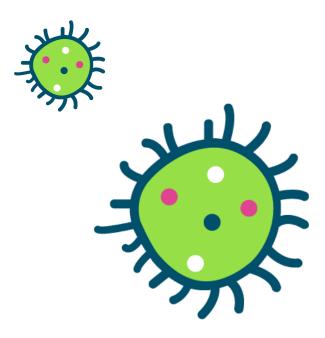
Do you consider yourself to be a carer, have a disability or a long-term health condition? (Select all that apply):

	Sunderland responses (328)	South Tyneside responses (30)
Yes, I consider myself to be a carer	87	5
Yes, I consider myself to have a disability	32	2
Yes, I consider myself to have a long-term condition	92	10
None of the above	110	12
I prefer not to say	7	1

Please can you tell us which vaccines you have received?

At this stage in the vaccine programme the majority of those who responded to the survey, both for Sunderland and the South Tyneside areas, had only received their first injection. 92% in Sunderland and 96% in South Tyneside.



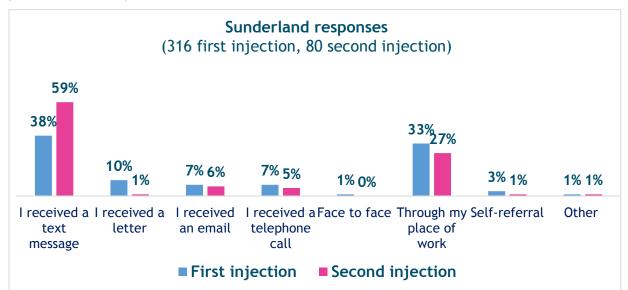


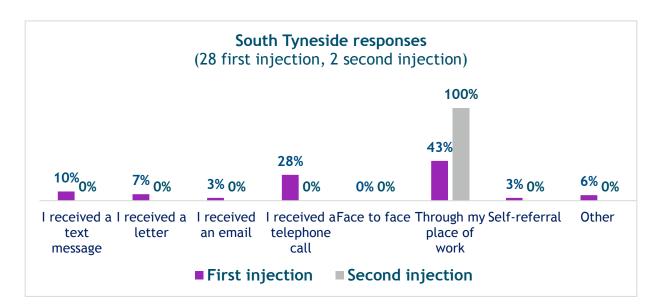
Receiving your invitation for an appointment

How were you invited to make your appointment to receive your vaccine?

The majority of the Sunderland respondents had received their invitation to have both their first and second vaccine either via a text message (38%, 59%) or through their place of work (33%, 27%). The majority of South Tyneside respondents had received their invitation for their first vaccine either through their place of work (43%) or via a telephone call (28%), and all patients received their second invite via their place of work.

Some respondents stated they received their invitations in other ways, these included; contacting the GP to make the appointment themselves or through the place where they volunteer.

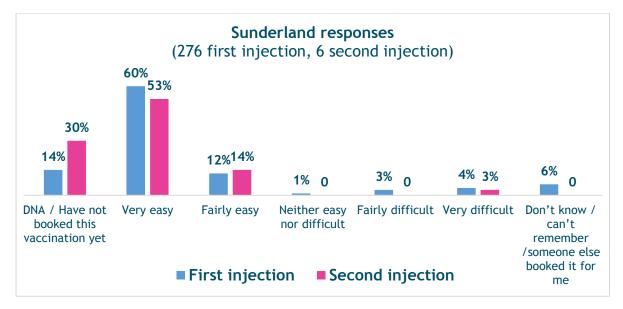


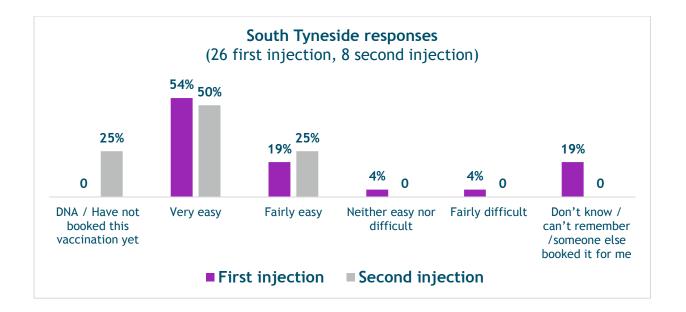


Booking your appointment

How easy was it for you to book your appointments?

Overall, the vast majority of Sunderland respondents, for both their first and second vaccination, stated that they found it very easy (60%, 53%) or fairly easy (12%, 14%) to book their appointment. Responses were similar for those living in the South Tyneside area, with most respondents finding booking their appointment either very easy (54%, 50%), or fairly easy (19%, 25%).





Please tell us what you found easy or difficult when booking your appointment for a COVID-19 vaccination

Sunderland responses

When we asked people what they found easy or difficult when booking their appointment we received mainly positive responses for Sunderland respondents. Some of the responses received included;

"I booked all of my 30 staff online and it was easy."
"Straight forward selecting appointment, received an email and booked easily."
"I clicked on the link then chose a time and date then clicked confirm, easy. I then received a confirmation text."
"Link on text to follow - easy peasy!"
"Was contacted by phone, made appointment there and then, very easy to do."
"Easy to follow instructions."

A minority of Sunderland respondents informed us that booking their vaccination appointment was difficult, with the main issues cited being the lack of available appointments or that the appointments chosen were no longer available by the end of the booking process, so they then had to start again. Responses included;

"Every time I followed the link I was sent the message that there were no appointments available. It took me about a fortnight to get an appointment. Appointment was for about 10 days later."

"It was difficult because I had to book 2 appointments together."

"Chose dates but by the time I reached the final stage was informed the date(s) were no longer available. This happened numerous times and places where I was offered to attend got further away from home. Nearly gave up but eventually secured dates for both injections."

"Tried multiple times but no appointment available anywhere."

"Got on to website OK seemed to be plenty of dates available, but when I got the end of my booking process it told me some of the dates that I had selected were not available but did not say if it was for the 1st or 2nd vaccination? So I had to start all over again."

South Tyneside responses

South Tyneside recipients were in the main positive about the booking process for their appointments. Some of the comments we received included;

"It was easy as GP text me"

"I received a telephone call from GP receptionist giving me date and time."

"A voicemail message was left, I called back - job done."

"Rang to enquire and was offered the date straight away."

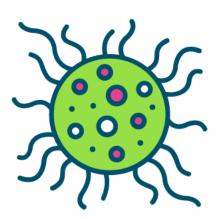
"Telephone call from GP made it easy and booking for both first and second booked at the same time."

We also received a small number of negative comments from South Tyneside respondents linked to difficulties booking their appointment, these included;

"Difficulty finding vacant appointment time."

"It took a little time of trying to get availability for the second injection appointment."







Venue for your vaccination

Where did you receive your vaccination?

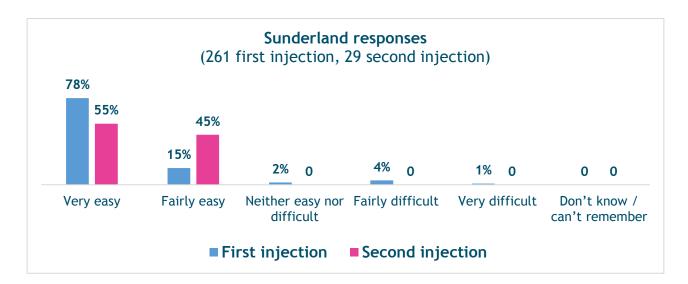
The chart below shows where respondents received their first and second vaccinations. Those who responded to say they had received their vaccination at another venue stated this was at the Arnison Vaccination Centre and the Centre for Life Vaccination Centre.

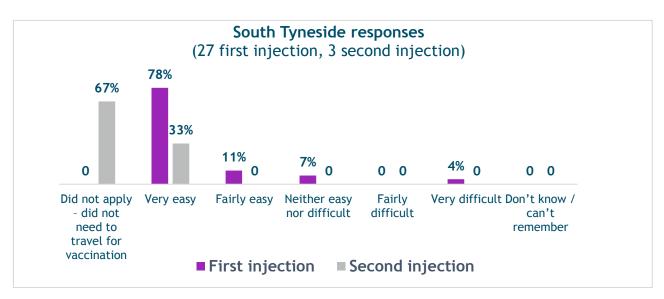
	Sunderland	respondents	South Tyneside respondents		
	First Vaccine (273 responses)	Second Vaccine (24 responses)	First Vaccine (28 responses)	Second Vaccine (5 responses)	
Bunnyhill Primary Care Centre	10%	4%	0%	0%	
Houghton Primary Care Centre	5%	0%	0%	0%	
Washington Primary Care Centre	7%	16.5%	0%	0%	
Grindon Lane Primary Care Centre	18%	46.5%	11%	0%	
Riverview Health Centre	2%	0%	0%	0%	
Nightingale Hospital Sunderland	32%	16.5%	28%	20%	
Millfield Medical Centre	19%	12.5%	0%	0%	
Cleadon Park Primary Care Centre	0%	0%	14%	0%	
Flagg Court Primary Care Centre	0%	0%	18%	20%	
The Glen Primary Care Centre	0%	0%	14%	40%	
Sunderland Bangladesh International Centre	0%	0%	0%	0%	
At Home	0% 1%	0% 0%	0% 4%	0% 0%	
At Hospital GP practice	0%	0%	4% 0%	0%	
At place of work	2%	4%	0%	0%	
Other	4%	0%	11%	20%	

How easy or difficult did you find it to get to the venue for your vaccination?

When asked how easy it was to get to the venue for their first vaccination the vast majority, 93% of Sunderland respondents stated they found it very easy or fairly easy, this was similar for those receiving their second vaccine with 100% finding it very easy or fairly easy.

Of the 30 responses received from South Tyneside patients the majority of those going for their first vaccine found accessing the venue either very easy or fairly easy (89%). The vast majority 67%, going for their second vaccine replied to say they did not need to travel to their venue and a further 33% found it very easy to get to the venue.





Please tell us more information about why you found it easy or difficult to travel for your vaccination

Sunderland responses

The majority of Sunderland respondents told us it was easy to get to their first and second vaccination appointment, as the venue was either known to them, easy to get to by car or public transport or was well signposted. Comments included;

"I can drive and I know where the Nightingale Hospital is."

"Very easy to find, directions provided worked in the Sat Nav and also very well signposted on the A19."

"I live five minutes from venue, it was easy to park and accessible as I am a wheelchair user."

"Only a 10 minute drive."

The minority of Sunderland respondents, stated that their vaccination appointment was difficult to get to, with the majority of these people stating that this was because of a diversion on the A19 due to roadworks. Some also stated that signposting to the Nightingale Hospital is an issue. Comments included;

"Came in from Washington - no signposts."

"Diversion in place due to roadworks."

"Nightingale Hospital only signposted at one side. Should be better signposted when entering from the opposite direction towards Nissan."

"A19 shut on the day, which was a bit of an issue."

"I was aware of the availability of wheelchair taxis but was not asked if I needed one during the call."

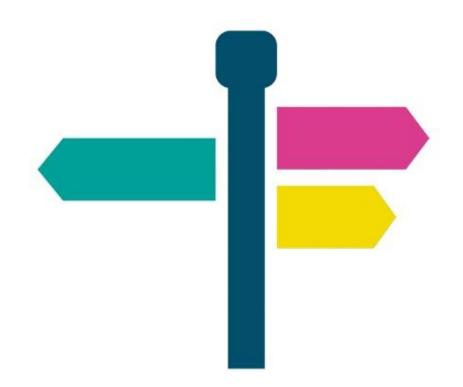
South Tyneside responses

The majority of South Tyneside respondents, stated that their vaccination appointment was easy to get to as they were familiar with the location or it was close to home. Comments included;

"Near home easy parking, especially in snow."
"As the venue was local I knew where it was with plenty of transport available to get there."
"I knew where Flag Court is and it was very well signposted once there."
"Close to home in a familiar location."

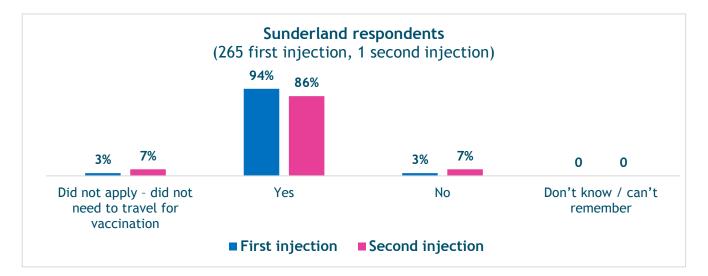
We only received one negative comment from the South Tyneside respondents, this was linked to the Nightingale Hospital, see below;

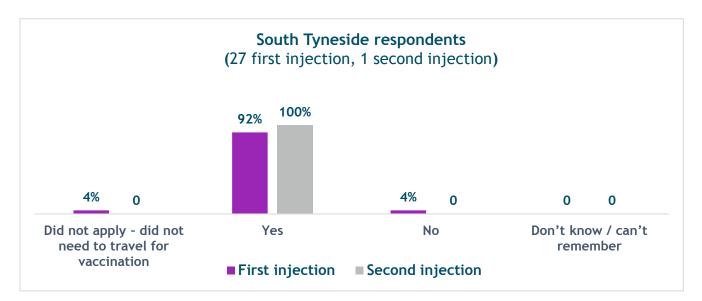
"I had to travel but drive so not an issue, public transport would have made it very difficult."



When arriving at the venue, were you met and shown where to go?

The vast majority of Sunderland respondents receiving both their first vaccination (94%) and second vaccination (86%) were met when arriving at the venue and were then shown where to go. The results were similar from the South Tyneside respondents, with 92% receiving their first vaccination being greeted and shown where to go and 100% receiving their second vaccine.

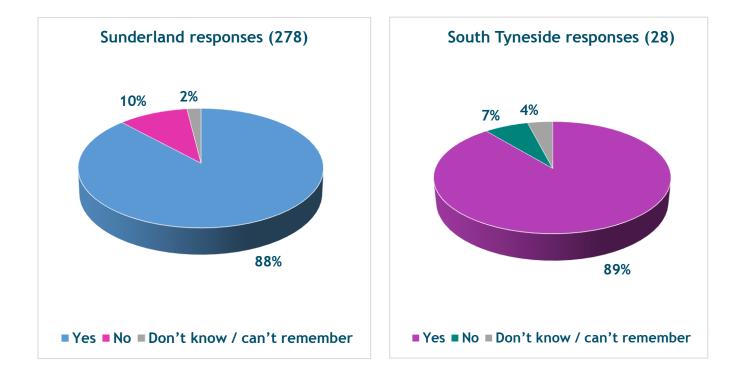




Were you told which vaccine you were getting?

Overall, the vast majority of Sunderland respondents 250 (88%) were informed of which vaccine they were receiving, very few 27 (10%) were not.

The results for South Tyneside respondents was very similar with 25 (89%) stating they had received information on which vaccination they had received and only 2 (7%) had not.



When receiving the vaccine was it explained to you about the possible side effects?

Overall, the vast majority of Sunderland respondents (92%) were informed of the possible side effects of the vaccine and few (5%) were not. In the South Tyneside area 100% of patients receiving the vaccine were informed of the possible side effects. See the charts for more information:





Receiving your injection

Please tell us how much you agree or disagree with the following statements

Overall the vast majority of Sunderland respondents either strongly agreed or agreed with the statements below which related to safety measures put in place at the vaccination centres. The results were similar with the South Tyneside respondents with most strongly agreeing to the statements and the minority disagreeing.

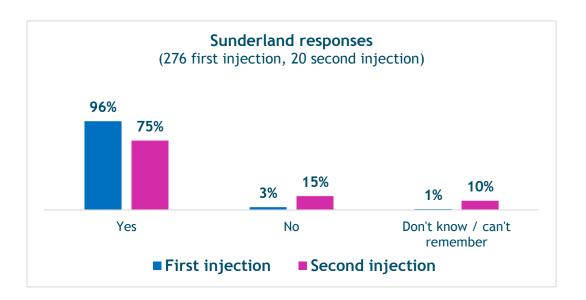
Sunderland respondents	DNA	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know / can't remember
I felt safe while receiving my injection	1%	70%	24%	2%	1%	2%	0%
The staff wore correct PPE	0.5%	74%	21%	1%	0.5%	2%	1%
Social distancing measures were in place	1%	68%	25%	3%	1%	2%	0%
People followed social distancing measures	1%	66%	25%	4%	2%	2%	0%
Hand sanitisers were available	1%	69 %	22%	1%	1%	1%	5%
The staff were helpful	1%	78 %	17%	2%	0.5%	1.5%	0

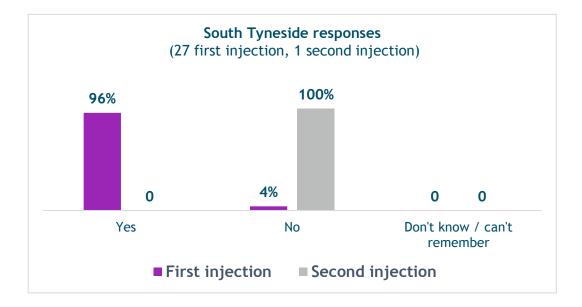
South Tyneside respondents	DNA	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know / can't remember
I felt safe while receiving my injection	0%	86%	14%	0%	0%	0%	0%
The staff wore correct PPE	0%	86%	14%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Social distancing measures were in place	0%	82%	14%	0%	4%	0%	0%
People followed social distancing measures	0%	79 %	17%	0%	4%	0%	0%
Hand sanitisers were available	0%	82%	14%	0%	4%	0%	0%
The staff were helpful	0%	86%	14%	0%	0%	0%	0%

After receiving your vaccination did you receive a vaccination record card?

Overall, the vast majority of Sunderland respondents (96%) did receive a vaccination card after their first vaccination and 75% after the second vaccination.

For South Tyneside respondents 96% received their vaccination card after their first vaccine and 100% after their second.



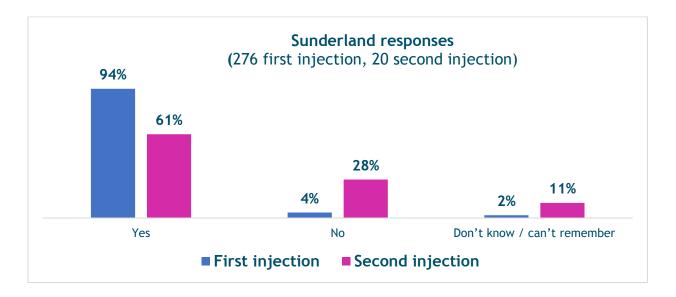


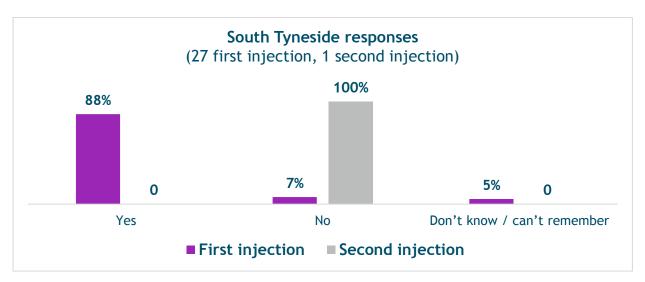
Information to take away

Did you receive an information leaflet to take away with you?

Overall the majority (94%, 61%) of Sunderland respondents stated that they had received an information leaflet to take way with them and in particular those receiving their first vaccination.

The responses for those receiving the first vaccination was similar for South Tyneside respondents with 88% receiving a leaflet and only one person replied about their second vaccine and they hadn't received a leaflet.

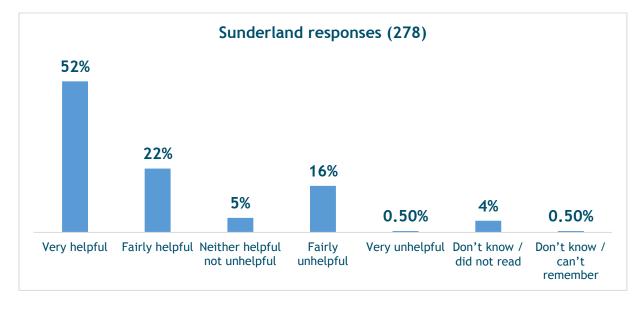


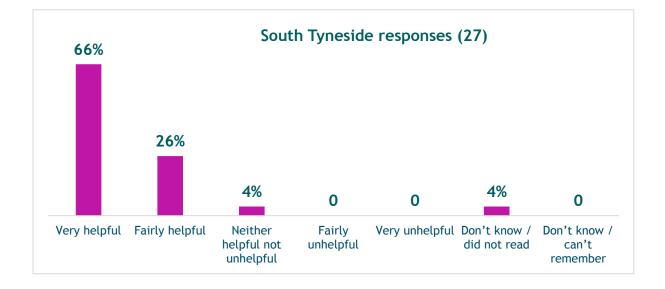


If you received some information to take away with you did you find it helpful?

The majority of Sunderland respondents had found the information they were given to take away was either very helpful or fairly helpful 74%.

92% of South Tyneside respondents found the information they received to take away was either very helpful or fairly helpful.





Tell us more about why you found the information helpful or unhelpful

Sunderland responses

The majority of Sunderland respondents indicated that they found the information in the leaflet provided to be clear and useful, especially to refer back to when experiencing side effects from the vaccination. Comments included;

"Told me what to expect and where to go for help if needed."

"Information provided was very helpful and easy to understand."

"It was helpful and explained about the vaccination and possible side effects."

Some Sunderland respondents commented negatively about the leaflet and how unhelpful they found it, including that the information provided in the leaflet was out of date. Here are some of their comments;

"The leaflet was poorly presented with too much jargon and my vaccination number was scrawled on the top in biro."

"Good to refer to but difficult for those who are illiterate/non-English readers."

"Badly written - 'resume activities that are normal for you' could be misinterpreted as permission to abandon social distancing."

"Some info out of date i.e. time between vaccines was original guidance."

"Leaflet had been photocopied so tonal contrast of white on grey poor."

South Tyneside responses

The majority of South Tyneside respondents were positive about the information leaflet provided, reasons cited again were linked to information provided on side effects and being useful to refer to at a later date. Some of the comments included;

```
"It was very informative and told me what I could experience afterwards."

"Gave all the relevant information about the vaccination and after effects."

"Lots of information re side effects."

"Much better than trying to remember verbal info."
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Only one negative comment was received, see below;

"Would have like more information about the vaccination."

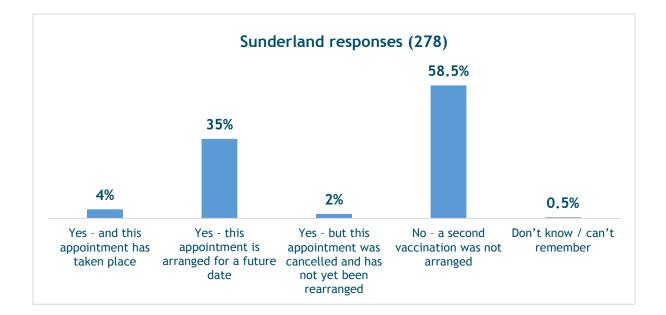


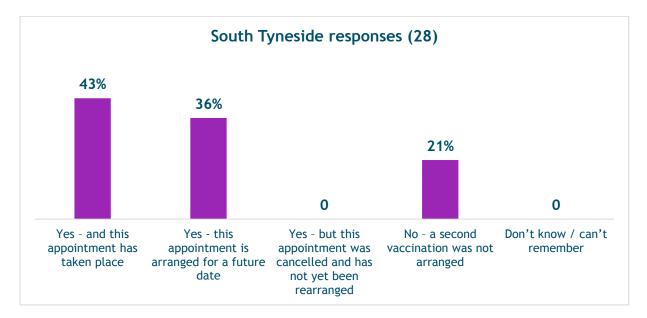
Second vaccinations

After you had your first injection, were you given the date and time of your second vaccination?

The majority of Sunderland respondents (58.5%) replied that they hadn't had their second vaccine appointment arranged after receiving their initial vaccination.

The majority of South Tyneside respondents replied to say that their second appointment had either taken place (43%) or had been arranged for a future date (36%).

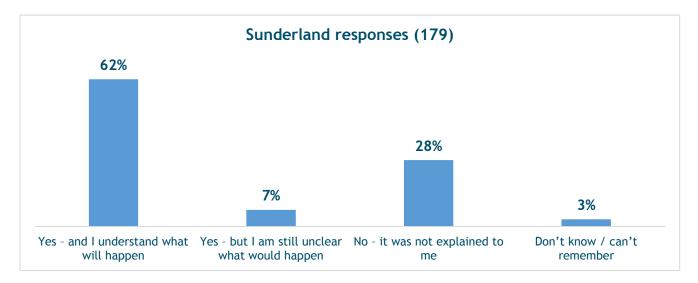


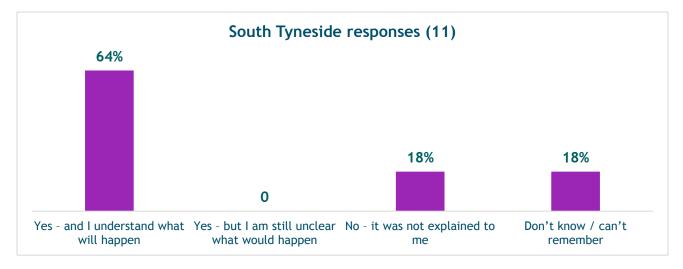


If you did not have a second vaccination appointment arranged, or your vaccination appointment was cancelled, did anyone explain to you what would happen when it was time for you to get your second vaccination?

The majority of Sunderland respondents, (62%) stated that they understood what would happen when it was time for their second vaccination, however a further 35% were still unclear or it wasn't explained to them.

Of the South Tyneside respondents, 64% started that they understood what would happen when it was time for their second vaccine a further 18% stated that they didn't and it hadn't been explained to them.



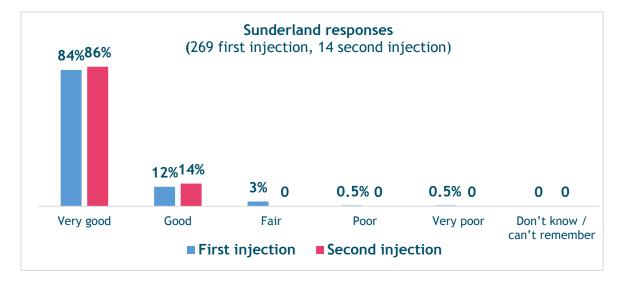


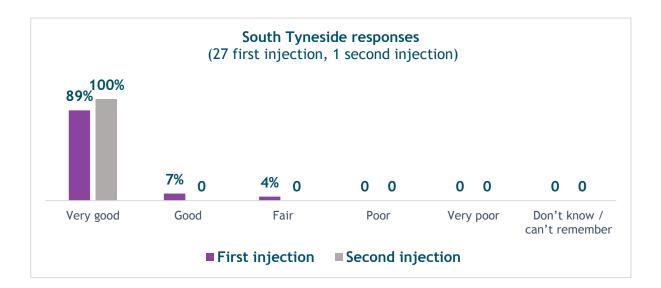
Overall experience

Overall how would you rate your experience of receiving your vaccine?

When asked respondents to rate their overall experience of receiving their vaccine, the majority (96%) of recipients in Sunderland rated the experience of receiving their first vaccine as either very good or good and a 100% of recipients who when receiving the second vaccine rated it as very good or good.

Similar results were received from South Tyneside respondents, with 96% rating the overall experience of receiving their first vaccine as either very good or good and 100% receiving their second vaccine rated their overall experience as very good.





Additional comments

Sunderland responses

Overall the people who gave comments in this section of the survey were very complimentary of the service they had received from the NHS when having their COVID-19 vaccinations, many stating that staff and volunteers had helped to make this a positive experience for them. Some of their positive comments included;

"Excellent service. Staff extremely helpful and made you feel at ease. It was the smoothest service I've ever received - well done to everyone involved."

"The whole process has been well organised and I feel safe to have my second vaccination."

The person I received my jab from was very welcoming, polite, placed you at ease and explained everything."

"I have a walking disability and was offered a wheelchair straight away, but I declined it as I'm very independent, however a little further round a lovely volunteer explained there was a lot of walking to do and ask me again about a wheelchair, this time I gratefully accepted, she pushed me around and chatted to me making the whole experience a pleasant one, as I was terrified of the unknown. All of the staff on duty that night are stars."

Some respondents indicated they had been dissatisfied with their experience of receiving their vaccination with the majority related to worries about not having their second vaccination booked in and others included the booking process or processes linked to physically receiving the vaccination. Some comments included;

"Would like to have received the appointment for my second injection earlier as I have had to ring Grindon Centre, wait 23 minutes to be connected to a call handler to be told to ring back next week when they should have more vaccine available for 2nd vaccinations."

"Worried that a date wasn't added to my vaccination card for a 2nd vaccination when all of my friends have a second date on their cards. Also worried that I would only be only offered a different vaccine than the first, as I want to be consistent with the same vaccine for both jabs and won't accept a different vaccine as report on safety won't be out until July at earliest."

"Should be given appointment for 2nd jab after getting the 1st jab so you know when to go back and don't have to worry about it."

"I felt I was rushed through and processed. Social distancing was not observed and the questions I was asked before the vaccination were inadequate. I was not offered a chance to rest or await any reactions before being dismissed. It felt like a race to see who could get the most vaccines done in a session with no elements of care or concern." Some people gave a mixed response about their experience of receiving the COVID-19 vaccination. Their comments included;

"I did not feel the first injection, but the second injection was painful."

"My experience from the NHS website is very poor, however Millfield Medical Centre were excellent and made what was becoming very stressful a much better experience, so the rating is for Millfield had this not happened the rating would have been very poor."

"I had multiple side effects to the vaccine which lasted 48 hours - some pre-warning of this would have been useful."

South Tyneside responses

All additional responses received from South Tyneside patients were positive and included;

"I couldn't have asked for anything more. Many thanks everyone."

"All very helpful staff at the site, a very calm environment which made me feel safe."

"The whole experience was well organised, plenty of marshals and staff who welcomed you and put you at ease."

Staff at Flagg Court were fantastic. Put me at ease and were very efficient and I felt totally safe at the PCC and was seen on time. The nurse explained everything and was very sympathetic and understanding. I like the way the staff all introduced themselves by name- excellent service."

"It was all extremely well organised and quick."

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