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Vaccine information For Young Carers

Action for Children and Barnardo's have been in contact with the Department of Health and the Medical advisor of the Covid 19 Vaccine programme. We have asked for some updated guidance on Young Carers, aged 8-18 years old, and their position in the Vaccine groups and to ensure young carers are acknowledged in this guidance.

Firstly, the Department of Health and the Covid 19 Vaccine Team would like to recognise the vital role and service, Young Carers provide, in caring for their family members especially during this pandemic. Also mentioned were the additional pressures of remote learning as well as dealing with their own and their families emotions associated with the lockdown measures.

According to the recently updated JCVI (Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation) guidance and confirmation from the Covid 19 Vaccine Team, carers over the age of 18 can access the vaccine. Those who are Clinically Extremely Vulnerable or Clinically Vulnerable can access the vaccine from age 16 years.

With regards to the Young Carers under 18 years of age, the Covid 19 Vaccine team have advised it is more important that the person they are caring for, gets vaccinated and thus protected. Even if the young person were vaccinated, they can still transmit the infection to others including those they care for.

Only one of the vaccines (Pfizer) is currently approved for use in young people aged 16 and 17. Clinical trials using AstraZeneca in young people are currently ongoing. It is hoped that there will be some updates about these trials this year.

The Vaccine team have advised that Covid-19 in young people tends to be a relatively mild illness and, in some cases, it is asymptomatic.

We hope that this is helpful information and gives some clarity to Young Carers and their families

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