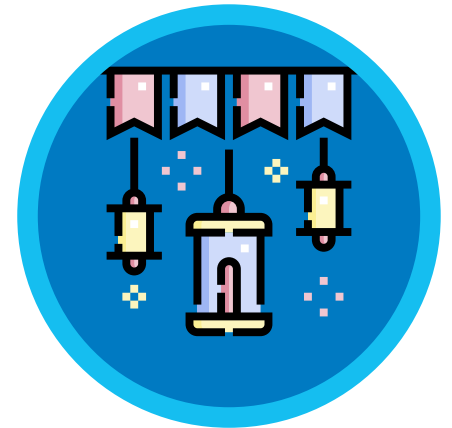


Supporting COVID-19 Vaccine uptake during Ramadan

The Islamic holy month of Ramadan is an important time for practising Muslims that involves a month of fasting, worship and community celebration. It is due to begin on 12 April 2021 (subject to moon sightings) bringing with it a change to normal daily life for many of our Muslim communities and NHS workforce.



To help build confidence, reduce any barriers to access and support the uptake of the COVID-19 vaccine amongst Muslim communities during the month of Ramadan, it is vital that system partners consider how they will reach out and engage with communities during this time.



Why Ramadan may impact on vaccine uptake

Scholarly leaders and the British Islamic Medical Association have stated that it is permissible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine while fasting during Ramadan.

Many Muslims may be wary of the medical impact of having a vaccination whilst fasting such as the potential side effects including nausea, dizziness and vomiting on the day or following day of vaccination which could lead to them having to break or forgo their fast.

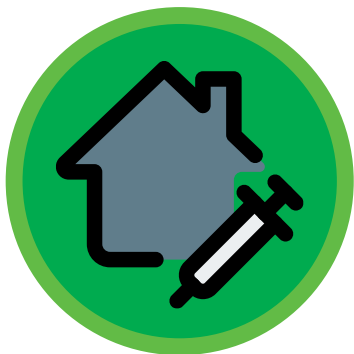
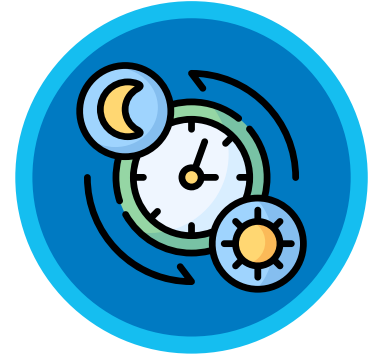
They may also have a preference to be vaccinated after Ramadan.



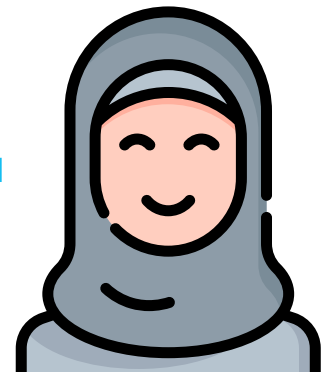
How to adapt vaccine delivery for maximum uptake

There are opportunities available to aid our efforts to support and promote uptake of vaccine within Muslim communities. You could consider implementing some or all of the following:

- Supporting pop-up / roving / temporary vaccination sites in areas with a high Muslim population as per the [pop-up guidance](#).
- Extended opening hours of vaccination sites during twilight hours in places with high Muslim population. Note, this may have an impact on workforce, vaccine supply, bookings and communications.
- Allowing greater flexibility in booking schedules for booking of later slots.
- Outreach into homes to support those that are housebound (as per existing guidance on vaccinating housebound residents) and women as the level of female attendance at places of worship is significantly lower than the male population.
- Flexibility to vaccinate where needed across Muslim groups, i.e. vaccinating members of multi-generational households on single visits.



There is additional funding available that can be used to support vaccine delivery during Ramadan. To understand the eligibility criteria and how to access the funding please speak to your Regional Finance Lead and review the [PCN Finance Guidance](#) available on FutureNHS.



Support for staff

The NHS workforce is made up of many Muslim members of staff who have already been working under unprecedented pressures. It is important that employers are aware of the impact of fasting on top of this and can provide necessary support, where required. You may want to consider:

- Dedicated messaging for Muslim healthcare workers during Ramadan avoiding stigmatisation.
- Tailored interventions to support staff during Ramadan to prevent burnout.
- Flexibility in booking schedules for staff yet to be vaccinated.
- A crib sheet with FAQs on Ramadan for booking staff.

[Ramadan and Eid Guidance 2021](#) for staff has also been developed by the NHS Muslim Network, British Islamic Medical Association and the Muslim Doctors Association.

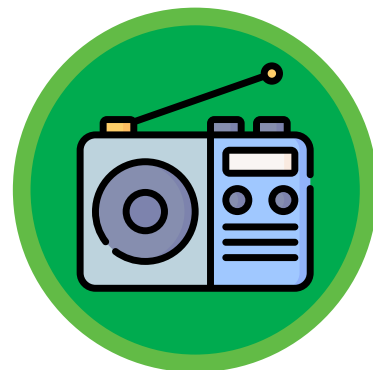


Reaching the Muslim population

During the month of Ramadan, many Muslims will be engaged in increasing their spirituality and understanding of their faith through listening to local/regional/national faith-based radio stations programme and/or watching national and international TV channels that have faith content programmes.

You can support the dissemination of vaccine messaging by considering the following, using local Muslim health professionals and networks to enhance trust and credibility:

- Share existing multi-lingual messages that have been co-created with input from clinical and faith leader pairings.
- Advertise multi-lingual messages on local faith-based community radio stations.
- Share and promote the nationally commissioned information shared via targeted TV channels.
- Increase visibility in the mainstream media of vaccinations being delivered in places of worship to further build confidence in the vaccination programme and organise visits for prominent leaders to enhance connections and trust.
- Provide content and consider sponsorship of messaging through the local council of mosques (or equivalent) and deliver coordinated daily messages and Friday sermon campaigns.
- Advertise vaccine information in Eid Magazines and Ramadan timetables that are developed at regional/local levels.



Useful resources

Additional resources are available to support you including:

- Public Health England campaign centre:
<https://coronavirusresources.phe.gov.uk/covid-19-vaccine/resources>
- British Islamic Medical Association:
<https://britishima.org>
- Vaccine equalities connect and exchange hub:
<https://future.nhs.uk/NationalCOVID19VaccineEquality>
- Guidance on vaccinating housebound residents:
<https://www.england.nhs.uk/2021/02/funding-boost-to-vaccinate-housebound/>