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**NHS Staff Urge Non-English Speaking Londoners to get the COVID-19 vaccine**

NHS doctors, nurses and other frontline staff have come forward to help reassure communities that COVID-19 vaccines are safe, effective and have been independently tested to the highest standards.

The clinicians have recorded messages in some of the most commonly spoken non-English languages in the capital to make sure all parts of London know the importance of getting a COVID-19 vaccine.

These include Dr Fharat Raja, a Consultant Oncologist at Royal Free London NHS Foundation Trust who speaks in Urdu, explaining how the vaccine is given, and providing clear evidence that the vaccines work and are safe for all.

It is hoped that the videos will be shared among friends, families, faith and community groups via WhatsApp, text message and on social media.

The languages the videos have been produced in are:

* Urdu
* Arabic
* Turkish
* Bengali
* Polish
* Romanian
* Gujurati
* Punjabi
* Spanish

More videos in additional languages, including Swahili and Yoruba, are in development.

**Dr Fharat Raja, Consultant Oncologist at Royal Free London NHS Foundation Trust said:**

“The COVID-19 vaccine gives you the best protection from coronavirus so when you are invited to get the vaccine, please go.

“The sooner we are all vaccinated, the sooner we can get London back to normal.”

The COVID-19 vaccines do not contain any alcohol, egg, meat or pork products, including gelatine. They also contain no foetal matter.

The vaccines have been tested on tens of thousands of people from different age groups and backgrounds including Black, Asian and other ethnicities.

The British Islamic Medical Association recommends both the Pfizer vaccine and the Oxford/ Astra Zeneca vaccine to Muslim communities.

**Medical director for the NHS in London, Dr Vin Diwakar, said:**

“As a doctor, I have seen first-hand how this virus has affected families and communities in London, with more than 12,000 Londoners losing their lives to Covid in the past year.

“Getting one of the safe, effective and well-tested vaccines when you are invited to do so is the best way you can protect yourself and those around you from becoming unwell.

“While we vaccinate more and more Londoners, we need everyone to keep playing their part in protecting each other by staying at home whenever possible.”

**The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, said:**

“It has been an exceptionally hard ten months for London and the UK – but the Covid-19 vaccines mean that there is some much-needed light at the end of the tunnel.

 “I urge all those who are offered the Covid-19 vaccine, to take it - so they can protect themselves and others.

 “We know BAME communities have been disproportionately affected by Covid-19 and videos such as this are a fantastic way to get the message out loud and clear that the vaccines are safe, effective and our best route out of this awful pandemic.”

The videos are published as a further eight community pharmacies this week join the capital’s fight against coronavirus and start delivering the life-saving jabs. This means that people invited to book their vaccine can now book at one of 26 pharmacy services operating across the capital.

**Notes to editors**

* The videos can be viewed and downloaded from the NHS London website: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/london/our-work/covid-19-vaccine-communication-materials/>
* Nobody needs to contact the NHS to request a vaccine, as people will be invited when it is their turn. People cannot get vaccinated by just turning up.
* The vaccine is free for everyone and the NHS will never ask people to pay for it.
* The British Islamic Medical Association’s statements on the Pfizer vaccine and the Oxford/Astra Zeneca vaccine: <https://britishima.org/operation-vaccination/hub/statements/#VAX>
* Covid-19 daily death statistics are published on the NHS England and NHS Improvement website: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-work-areas/covid-19-daily-deaths/>