

- To:
- Chief medical officers
 - Chief nursing officers
 - Chief psychological professions officers
 - Psychological professions networks

Skipton House
80 London Road
London
SE1 6LH

14 September 2021

Dear Colleagues,

Vaccine-induced thrombocytopenia and thrombosis (VITT): Support for patients/family members

Vaccine-induced immune thrombocytopenia and thrombosis (VITT) is a new, rare condition that has been identified after COVID-19 vaccination, so far affecting approximately 1:50,000 AZ vaccine recipients under 50 years old, and 1:100,000 for those ages 50 years and older in England. The effect of the blood clots can be devastating, and we want to ensure our patients and their families are supported to respond to the impacts of VITT, both mentally and physically.

We are writing to ask you to ensure that within your organisations and networks, the needs of these patients are identified and responded to proactively. The UK Expert Haematology Panel focussed on VITT has advised haematologists to ensure that VITT patients are provided with clear information about how to seek psychological support in response to VITT.

Please can you now ensure that clinicians and patient advice and liaison services (PALS) in your organisations are primed to respond to support these patients in accessing the best possible psychological rehabilitation and intervention, appropriate to their needs. We attach the information that has been made available to patients.

Many thanks for your support in this matter.

Yours faithfully,



Claire Murdoch
National Mental Health Director
NHS England and NHS Improvement



Dr Sue Pavord
Chair of the Expert Haematology Panel
Oxford University Hospitals

Vaccine-induced immune thrombocytopenia and thrombosis (VITT)

Support for patients/ family members

Vaccine-induced immune thrombocytopenia and thrombosis (VITT) is a new condition that has been identified after COVID-19 vaccination. The effect of the blood clots can be very serious and we want to ensure our patients and their families are supported to respond to the impacts of VITT, both mentally and physically. This letter provides details of how to access support.

- **Psychological support**

Many hospitals are able to offer psychological support as an integrated part of their rehabilitation service and patients can be offered an appointment with a specialist such as a clinical psychologist or consultant psychiatrist. Please discuss this with your doctor.

Psychological support may also be available if you were admitted to intensive care in hospital. You may have been given contact details on how to access this service on discharge.

- **IAPT services are available across the country**

IAPT (improving access to psychological therapies) services offer talking therapies, such as cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT), other therapies, and guided self-help and help for common mental health problems, like anxiety and depression. You can find your local service [here](#) and find out how to refer yourself.

- **The Every Mind Matters platform**

This is available for all and includes practical tips and support on how adults can deal with uncertainty, how to cope with money and job worries and how to look after both their own and their family's mental wellbeing: <https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/>

- **Thrombosis UK**

This charity offers support for patients and their families whose lives have been impacted by VITT: <https://thrombosisuk.org/>

If you have suggestions for how else we could support you in your recovery or know of other resources locally that might be of benefit to others, please inform your haematologist who can share this information with others.

Leaflet produced by the Expert Haematology Panel focused on VITT.