

# Supporting vaccination during 2020/21

Podiatrists joined the vaccination campaign to aid in the efficient rollout of both the flu and COVID-19 vaccination programmes across the UK.

Podiatrists have key injection skills, administering local anaesthetic and steroids as part of their interventions, so the move to becoming vaccinators was a smooth transition.

As of March 2022, over 3.73 million doses of the COVID-19 vaccine have been administered in Northern Ireland.

Both peer and public vaccinations have been undertaken by podiatrists during the pandemic and our members will continue to assist where needed.



## How to get an appointment with a podiatrist

Podiatrists are essential healthcare providers and have been able to work safely throughout all levels of restrictions during the pandemic. Some podiatrists are also able to offer virtual consultations where they deem it appropriate. There are different ways to see a podiatrist, and may depend on where you live.

### Local NHS

Some areas allow an individual to self-refer and in others a GP referral is required. An individual can check with their local NHS for information.

Individuals with a long-term medical condition such as diabetes or poor circulation and are at risk of complications may be eligible for NHS podiatry services.

## How to find a podiatrist

### Northern Ireland

Use the tool on our website to find a podiatrist:

[rcpod.org.uk/find-a-podiatrist](https://rcpod.org.uk/find-a-podiatrist)

### Independent Practice

It's important to find a professional who is registered with the Health Care Professions Council, the UK-wide regulatory body.

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# Podiatry: Keeping the nation on its feet Saving Limbs, Saving Lives

## Who we are:

The Royal College of Podiatry is the academic authority for podiatry in the UK, and the professional body and trade union for the UK's registered podiatrists. We provide information to the public, media and health organisations as well as professional and employment support for podiatrists in the UK.

**Further foot health information:** The Royal College of Podiatry website [www.rcpod.org.uk](https://www.rcpod.org.uk) provides a wealth of information on common foot conditions and general foot health advice.

**To discuss any of the issues covered, or to find out how the Royal College of Podiatry can help you and your constituents, please contact:**

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## Saving Limbs, Saving Lives

As the experts in lower limb care, podiatrists provide a range of services to improve and save lives. Early intervention for those living with complex medical conditions or mobility challenges can ensure prevention of more complex and costly issues, both to the NHS and to the patient's quality of life. Our highly trained members treat complex needs and work autonomously, as well as in

multidisciplinary teams, to assess, diagnose and treat a wide spectrum of issues. Treating diabetic foot complications costs more than preventative care. Delays in access to specialist care can lead to severe long-term ulcers, and amputation. Severe ulcers and amputations devastate lives and increase NHS costs.



## Overview of our policy papers



### The Saks Report

The Royal College of Podiatry has published the Saks Report, a landmark report looking at the future of podiatry. It makes 28 recommendations on what the profession needs to do to develop, sustain itself and thrive in the future.

To download the report please visit  
[www.rcpod.org.uk/saksreport](http://www.rcpod.org.uk/saksreport)



## Support during the pandemic

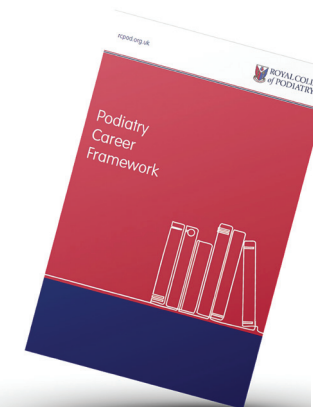
Since the onset of the pandemic in 2020, podiatrists have risen to the challenge to help support the health service and their local community. Our NHS members provided essential life saving care both in podiatry services and in redeployed roles across ICU, district nursing and vaccination centres. They excelled in these roles and have fostered new, lasting relationships with other healthcare professions to the benefit of patient services. Our members in independent practice continued to provide critical and urgent care services throughout lockdown, helping to relieve the pressure on the NHS. They adapted admirably during both the pandemic and the issues affecting medical supplies as a result.



## Podiatry Career Framework

The Royal College of Podiatry is pleased to have launched its Podiatry Career Framework. This framework will assist podiatrists, and other members of the foot health workforce, to chart their career progression within the sector and help provide industry-standard levels of attainment for podiatrists across all sectors of work.

Download your copy  
[www.rcpod.org.uk/news/careersframework](http://www.rcpod.org.uk/news/careersframework)



## 2022 and beyond

2022 marks 40 years since podiatry undergraduate education became available in Northern Ireland. The Ulster University programme ensures that a multitude of skills and knowledge are developed by its graduates. Fundamental to this is the development of the critically reflective mindset and significant time is spent developing key clinical reasoning skills and an evidence-led knowledge base. The Royal College works closely with Ulster University to ensure a high quality, valuable learning experience for students and a highly valued training process for employers and the wider workforce.



## Podiatrists as First Contact Practitioners

Podiatrists working as First Contact Practitioners significantly reduce demand on GPs, whilst ensuring people see the right person, at the right time, closer to home. Podiatrists provide a valuable offer to the primary care system in terms of increasing capacity and reducing the societal or healthcare burden associated with poor foot health and reduced walking ability. Download your copy [www.rcpod.org.uk/the-college/policy-positions](http://www.rcpod.org.uk/the-college/policy-positions)