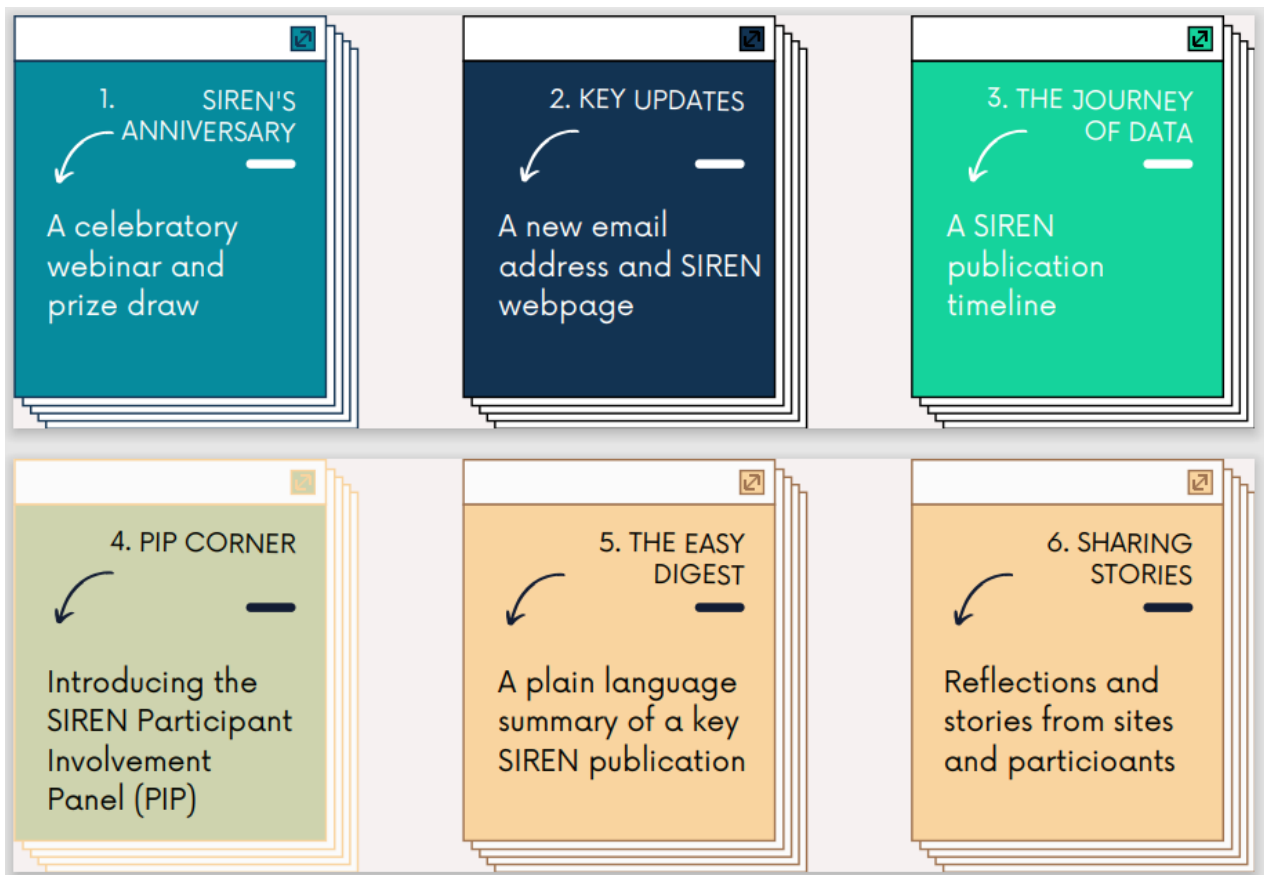




Dear SIREN participants,

Welcome to the anniversary issue of our SIREN newsletter for participants. To mark our two-year anniversary, the SIREN newsletter has adopted a fresh new look as we seek to provide you with the most relevant, exciting, and engaging content.

Coming up in this issue:



## 1. Celebrating SIREN's second year anniversary



**18 June 2022 marked the two-year anniversary of the first participant being recruited into the SIREN study.** We are proud that SIREN has developed into a unique, UK-wide partnership with NHS healthcare workers providing an agile response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our success is due to your ongoing participation and contribution – and for that we would like to say a huge thank you. More on what makes SIREN unique and its impact to date can be found in a [blog](#) written by **Dr Susan Hopkins**, Chief Investigator of SIREN.

We would like to invite you to our celebratory webinar on **27 July 2022, 12:30 – 13:30**. This will be an opportunity to come together with all SIREN participants to celebrate our collaborative achievements to date, highlight key study outputs and more. **Please keep this time free in your diaries and keep an eye out for the email invite which will follow.**

To further celebrate we are also running a **prize draw**. There will be a number of prizes up for grabs, including items such as an afternoon tea for two, comedy night tickets, fun courses and more. **Please use this [link](#) to enter.** Winners will be announced during the SIREN celebratory webinar.

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## 2. Key updates

### A) New email address to contact the SIREN team

From this week onwards please use the following email address to get in touch with the SIREN team:

[siren.participants@ukhsa.gov.uk](mailto:siren.participants@ukhsa.gov.uk)



**GOV.UK**

Home > Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Guidance

## SIREN study

Providing vital research into coronavirus (COVID-19) immunity and vaccine effectiveness nationally.

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From: [UK Health Security Agency](#)  
Published 20 June 2022  
Last updated 21 June 2022 — [See all updates](#)

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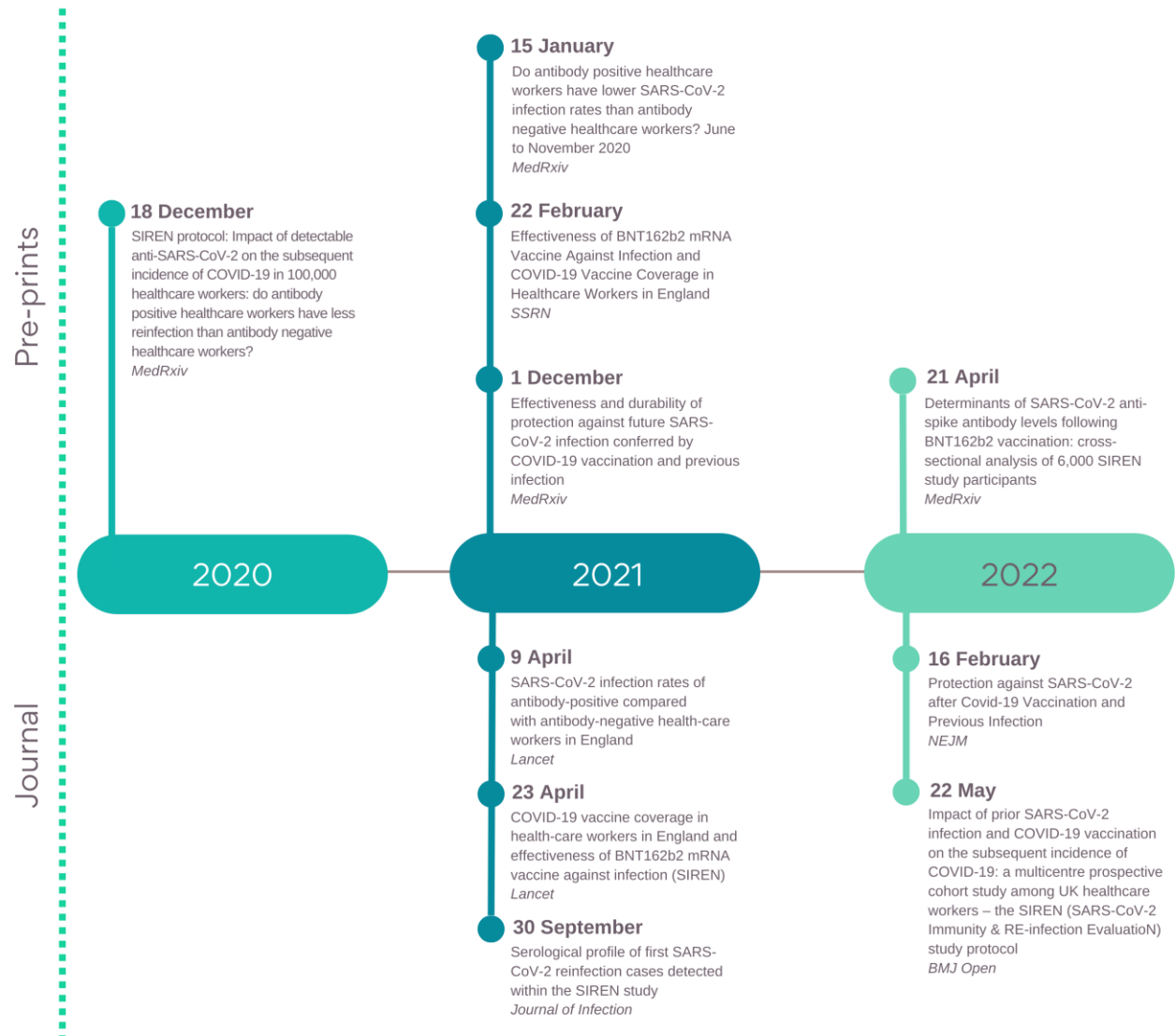
### B) SIREN study on GOV.UK

We are pleased to announce that we now have a dedicated SIREN [webpage](#). This includes:

- An overview of the study
- A location list of all sites involved in the study (both active and no longer active)
- Key research findings and links to published papers
- Our partners such as SIREN consortium members
- UKHSA blog links

### 3. The journey of data

#### A SIREN publication timeline:

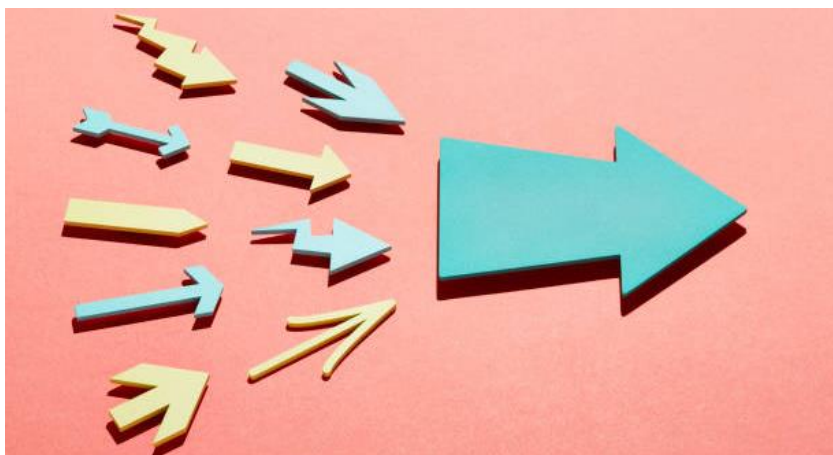


#### 4. Participant Involvement Panel (PIP) Corner

Your SIREN Participant Involvement Panel is continuing to meet on a regular six weekly basis. The PIP is comprised of seven SIREN study participants recruited from a range of geographical areas and professional backgrounds.

For our most recent meeting earlier in July we were joined by Ed Monk, Clinical Research Fellow within the UKHSA SIREN team. Ed shared findings from a soon to be published paper which focused on characterising the second COVID-19 wave in healthcare workers. PIP members had the opportunity to ask Ed about the methodology and findings from the study, and they provided feedback on how the results could be received by wider audiences. PIP members also contributed ideas for future areas of research.

The PIP also fed back on the Plain Language Summary introduced in the next section and provided feedback on a range of upcoming SIREN communications. The PIP next meets in August.




**JOIN  
US?**

We are excited to share that we will soon be recruiting for new members of the SIREN Participant Involvement Panel. PIP members to date have made a valuable contribution to the SIREN study through providing open and honest feedback on its research aims and outputs, helping with engagement activities and ensuring the participant voice is heard.

**Further information on the application process and what being a panel member entails will be provided at the end of July. Please keep an eye out!**

## 5. The Easy Digest

### Plain Language Summary: Protection against SARS-CoV-2 after Covid-19 Vaccination and Previous Infection

<h3>Research questions</h3>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How effective are vaccines at preventing COVID-19?</li> <li>• Was there any difference in vaccine effectiveness between people who had a short gap (3 weeks) between injections compared to a long gap (3 months)?</li> <li>• Did having COVID-19 previously make any difference to how effective the vaccine was?</li> </ul>
<h3>Who participated in the study?</h3>	 <p>37,564 healthcare workers (95% vaccinated)</p> <p>87% participants had the Pfizer vaccine; 8% AstraZeneca; 5% not yet vaccinated</p>
<h3>What did the study find?</h3>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthcare workers who had not had COVID-19 before and received two doses of the Pfizer vaccine were 85% less likely to be infected. This reduced to 51% shortly after 6 months.</li> <li>• Healthcare workers who received the AstraZeneca vaccine were 58% less likely to be infected.</li> <li>• There was no real difference for people with a short or long gap between vaccine doses for either the Pfizer or AstraZeneca vaccine.</li> <li>• In participants who received the Pfizer vaccine following infection, vaccine effectiveness increased to 90%. This remained high after 6 months even if it was more than a year since infection.</li> </ul>
<h3>Why is this significant?</h3>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It shows that vaccinations are very effective, but this reduces over time, suggesting boosters may be required.</li> <li>• There was no negative effect from delaying the second vaccine for 3 months.</li> <li>• Vaccination following infection boosts the vaccine effect and reduces your risk of reinfection compared to remaining unvaccinated.</li> </ul>
<h3>Take home messages</h3>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vaccination is an important method to prevent COVID-19.</li> <li>• It is important to have a vaccine even if you have been infected with COVID-19.</li> <li>• Booster vaccinations may be required due to the reduction in vaccine effectiveness over time.</li> </ul>

## 6. Sharing stories: Reflections and stories from sites and participants

Thanks to all those who have submitted reflections on being part of the SIREN study. Further reflections from sites will be shared in future editions of the newsletter.

If you would like to contribute, please send your reflections to [siren.participants@ukhsa.gov.uk](mailto:siren.participants@ukhsa.gov.uk) using "Sharing stories: reflections" as the email subject.

*"To have part of this research study felt like I was able to do something positive and useful in response to the pandemic. How SARS-CoV-2 was spread and the risks of working in health care and exposure to this virus. Having the blood test showed that there was some immunity to be gained from the vaccine."*

**Adam, Lead Nurse, Older Adult Acute Inpatient, Derbyshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust**

*“Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust is nearing the end of the SIREN extension. Our site opened in July 2020 and recruited 100 participants, with 59 people consenting to the extension. As Lincolnshire has a wide demographic, we set the study up at three different sites across the county, enabling staff from different areas of the Trust to participate. We further streamlined our processes to facilitate participant appointment schedules, providing convenient swab drop-off locations. This reduced our clinic time, ensuring efficient study delivery and encouraging participant retention.*

*Our focus has been to make participation easy, enjoyable, and beneficial. We provided participants with regular results via email of both PCR and antibody tests, which we feel has helped with engagement. We also sent appointments in advance to help with organising work diaries. This also allowed us to effectively plan clinics in advance, giving a greater degree of flexibility in re-arranging appointments where needed. Feedback on our delivery has been positive. In our 2020/21 ‘Participant in Research Experience Survey’, we had 65 responses about SIREN. For 3/4 of participants, it was their first experience of research and 63 said they would consider taking part in research again. Participants commented that they felt “useful”, “valued”, and that they were “making a difference”. Many have also said that they would like the study to continue, and several have already consented to VIBRANT. So overall a positive experience!*

*SIREN has enabled us to make stronger connections with other teams in our Trust. For example, we have hosted student nurses in the clinic and have provided them with the opportunity to develop their clinical skills whilst engaging in vital research. SIREN has also increased the research team’s visibility, highlighting the benefits of research generally, but also providing us with a platform to promote other studies. Regular face-to-face contact with staff in the new era of home- and hybrid-working has enabled us to encourage them to keep research active. We have also worked closely with our non-research colleagues in the delivery of SIREN. For instance, the physical healthcare team provided additional support and training in venepuncture and other colleagues assisted in swab collections, ensuring flexibility for our participants. Further, our labs have been instrumental to the SIREN study. They have been incredibly responsive to our needs, providing us with supplies, streamlining our results/reports, and being receptive when changing our target from 50 to 100. Without this collaborative working we do not feel SIREN would have been as successful in our Trust.*

*As SIREN draws to a close at our site, we are looking forward to thanking our participants and hopefully the connections we have made will enable us to welcome them back to research in the future.”* **Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust**