Producing Barcodes for your COVID Clinics

The purpose of this is to produce barcodes to speed up data entry into Pinnacle. This is not the only way to do this and will only be suitable for some practices depending on how they run their clinics.

Initial Setup

1.   Firstly to use this technique you need to have a list of patients in excel (or equivalent) – the list must have NHS number and DOB (in the format dd-mmm-yyyy eg 08-Sep-1973) and needs to have patient's name so you can find them in the list.

Note that depending on which clinical system you are using and how you booked the appointments you may need to compile this list from a number of practices. I will not be covering this here.

2.   Download the font you need from
https://github.com/graphicore/librebarcode/blob/master/fonts/LibreBarcode39Text-Regular.ttf

Click the Download button on the right side of the screen. This downloads as a TrueType font so just double click the file which will open up a preview of the font. Top left of the window is a button to Install – click this and follow the prompts.

The font is now installed and can be selected in any program in the same way as any other font. However, note that it can only be used for short chunks of text (otherwise the barcode gets too big). Also, **for the scanner to recognise the barcode it must start and end with *** (asterisk) – this won't come out in the scan – it is just an instruction for the scanner.

Sorting the Spreadsheet

3.   Make sure your spreadsheet contains all the information you require – As a minimum you want full name, date of birth and NHS number. If you are merging for a letter then you'd need more. DOB needs to be date format in Excel (not text) – this will usually be the case automatically.

4.   You now need to add the asterisk before and after each entry.

For DOB - In a new column enter the following formula (assuming your original date is in B2)

$$="*"\&TEXT(B2,"dd-mmm-yyyy")\&"*"$$ Copy this formula to all the cells in the column

For NHS Number - In a new column enter the following formula (assuming your original NHS No is in D2)

$$="*"\&D2\&"*"$$ Copy this formula to all the cells in the column

5.   You may want to sort your spreadsheet by name or DOB in order to aid finding patients on the day.

Producing the barcodes

6.   In excel this is very easy. Just highlight the columns you want to be displayed as barcodes and then change the font to Libre Barcode 39 Text. You will probably need to increase the font size to make them usable.

Your final spreadsheet should look like this -
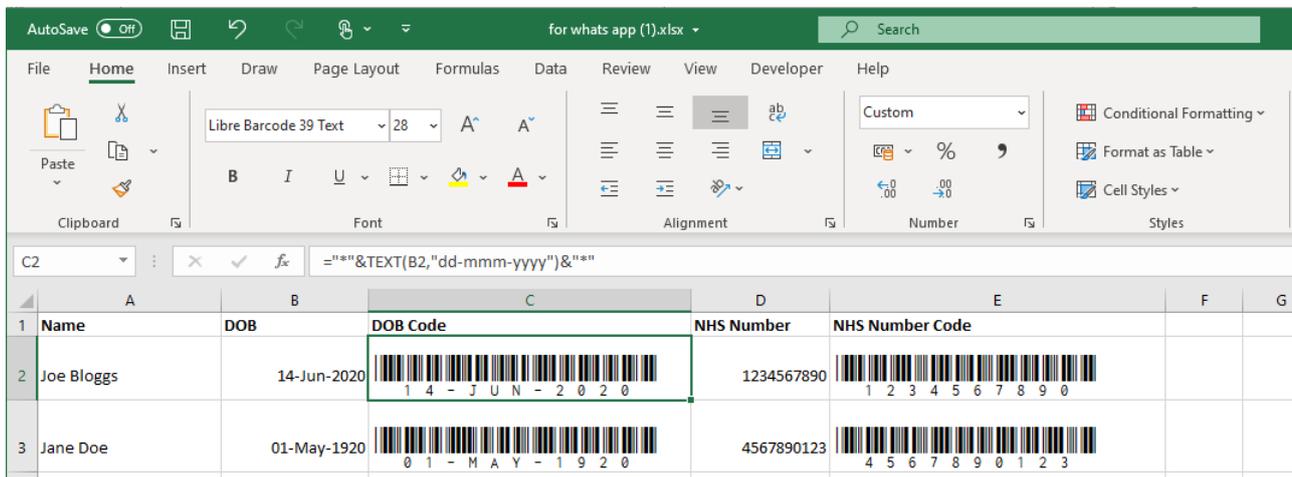
ALTERNATIVELY

7. You can mail merge the spreadsheet into word – there are a number of uses for this

   a. Print sticky labels that you give to the patient on entry
   b. Print a sheet to give to the patient on entry (this might have extra info on it such as consent info and contraindications, as well as information on how to book the next jab etc)
   c. Printing invitation letters with barcodes already on them

Merging in word isn't too difficult and there are tutorials for this available

https://www.howtogeek.com/413665/how-to-create-mailing-labels-in-word-from-an-excel-list/

https://www.webucator.com/how-to/how-use-mail-merge-microsoft-word.cfm

Using the Scanner

When you plug in the scanner it should just be recognised automatically. Effectively it is working as a keyboard so you just click in the box for DOB or NHS Number and then scan the code. The text should just appear.

Most scanners have a function to add a Tab after each scan although may not do it by default. In the box that the scanner came in there should be instructions which include barcodes that you can scan to change this setting. An example of this is below though this may not work for your scanner