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To:

- ICS and STP leads
- All CCG Accountable Officers
- All NHS Foundation Trust and Trust Chief Executives
- All COVID-19 vaccination sites
- All PCNs and all GP practices
- All Community Pharmacy
- All Local Authority Chief Executives

Copy to:

- Chairs of ICS and STPs
- All CCG Chairs
- Chairs of NHS trusts and foundation trusts
- NHS Regional Directors
- NHS Regional Directors of Commissioning

15 June 2021

Dear colleagues

### Acceleration of second doses for cohort 10 (40 to 49 year olds)

In response to advice from the independent JCVI, the Government has set out that appointments for a second dose of the COVID-19 vaccine will be brought forward from 12 to 8 weeks for the remaining people in cohort 10 (people in their 40s) who have yet to receive their second dose. This is to ensure priority groups have the strongest possible protection from the Delta variant of the virus at the earliest opportunity possible.

This announcement builds on the previous [advice](#) that second doses for cohorts 1-9 should be brought forward from 12 weeks to 8 weeks. All providers are asked to continue to vaccinate priority groups as soon as possible and not to hold on to vaccine supply. Second dose vaccinations should not be offered earlier than 8 weeks except in accordance with the guidance by JCVI and the Green Book.

### **ACTIONS NOW REQUIRED**

From 15 June, functionality on the National Booking Service (NBS) will change so that **anyone** who books their appointments through NBS will be offered their second dose appointment **56 to 84 days after their first dose appointment**. Work is expected to be completed shortly so that patients that wish to rebook are able to check the level of appointment availability on the NBS before cancelling and rescheduling their existing second dose appointment.

For those in cohort 10 who have already received a first dose of a vaccination and have an appointment booked for a second dose in the next 10 days (up to and including 23 June) **no action is required and appointments should continue as scheduled**.

For those in cohort 10 who have their second dose appointment scheduled on or after next Thursday 24 June:

- **Vaccination centres and community pharmacy-led LVS:** every effort needs to be made to ensure all additional capacity for first and second doses is uploaded to the National Booking System (NBS). Vaccination Centres should open up second dose slots from 8 weeks after the first dose where supplies allow.

From 21 June, we will start texting those with bookings more than 10 days out and more than 9 weeks from their first dose, inviting them to rebook.

From 28 June, we will start a more intense reminder service. We will contact people within Cohorts 1-10 who have not yet had their 2<sup>nd</sup> dose vaccination after 70 days encouraging them to arrange an appointment as soon as possible.

- **PCN-led Local Vaccination Services:** all second dose appointments for those in cohort 10 scheduled on or after 24 June (where that is more than 8 weeks after their first dose) should be brought forward. Plans to do this should include working with your ICS to bring in additional workforce to run additional clinics – we announced last week an additional £20 million to support primary care providers to draw down additional staff through their lead employer to help deliver the COVID-19 vaccination programme between 16 June and 14 July 2021 – [read more here](#). We've also previously offered all PCN groupings an additional payment of £1,000 for rescheduling second dose appointments on or after 25 May 2021. Read more [here](#).

In addition to using the stock already in the network, revised second dose supply delivery schedules will be communicated shortly in the usual way. If PCN sites have exhausted all opportunities to bring forward second doses and still have insufficient capacity to bring forward second dose clinics, they may wish to redirect patients to book via the NBS.

From 28 June, we will contact people within Cohorts 1-10 who have not yet had their 2<sup>nd</sup> dose vaccination after 70 days encouraging them to arrange an appointment as soon as possible.

- **Hospital Hubs:** all second dose appointments for those in cohort 10 scheduled on or after 24 June (where that is more than 8 weeks after their first dose) should be brought forward. For those hospital hubs which are now utilising NBS, every effort needs to be made to ensure all additional capacity for first and second doses is uploaded.

#### Plans for inviting the remainder of cohort 12 (18-24 year olds) to book their COVID-19 vaccinations

Today, **Tuesday 15 June**, we will send text messages to people **aged 23 and 24** inviting them to book their vaccination appointments through the National Booking Service (on the NHS website or by calling 119).

We expect to then invite the remainder of cohort 12 to book their appointments later this week and will send further communications on timings as soon as possible.

Hospital hub and PCN vaccination services should align with this approach.

Community Pharmacy and PCN-led sites should continue to work with their local commissioners to establish temporary vaccination clinics where this will help increase uptake. Further detail can be found [here](#).

### System capacity

These changes, while challenging, offer us all an opportunity to turbo-charge delivery of our life-saving programme. Additional support to deliver at every level of the system is available including:

- The workforce offer for PCNs and community pharmacies described above as well as the existing lead employer ICS-level support for VCs and Hospital Hubs;
- ICS-level funding support for outreach to specific communities and in areas of low uptake, including for communications and engagement. This should be developed in partnership with local authorities;
- ICS-level capacity support to increase coverage, in particular by bringing on more community pharmacy sites and re-engaging with PCNs who are not currently engaged in phase 2.

We will also be doing more national-level comms to increase engagement and excitement about this final 'sprint' of the vaccination offer to all adults. We expect that the chance to invite all adults will help local systems go full tilt at delivery across all communities and cohorts.

### Discussion

Finally, a webinar will be held for all key partners involved in COVID-19 vaccine deployment on 16 June at 6.15pm-7.00pm. This will provide an opportunity to celebrate the achievements of the NHS Covid-19 vaccination programme over the last six months and recognise the hard work of the NHS staff, volunteers and key partners in delivering the vaccine to over 60 million people. We will also use the time to discuss the new developments outlined above and ensure every site and every system has what they need to deliver against our challenging and life-saving goals. Please [register](#) to attend before 4.30pm on the day of the event.

Thank you for your continued leadership on this vital programme.



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