



ICARS Newsletter

Issue 85: 21st April 2022

Immunisation Clinical Advice Response Service

About this bulletin:

For any COVID-19 vaccination related queries or to escalate an incident please contact: england.swicars@nhs.net

PLEASE SHARE WITH ALL RELEVANT STAFF INVOLVED WITH THE VACCINATION PROGRAMME

Please note that ICARS operates from 9am - 5pm Monday to Friday.

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1. REMINDER: Workforce and training considerations 5-11-year olds

The [children's workforce & training guidance pack](#) provides:

- Outlines the clinical red lines that must be in place to enable the safe vaccination of children
- Additional design principles to support the vaccination of this cohort in vaccination centres, plotting the vaccination journey “through the eyes of a child”
- Vaccination pathway adjustments recommended and an illustrative workforce model example to support, to ensure throughput can be maintained through the pod model
- The additional training requirements which are needed to vaccinate this cohort
 - Clinical staff need to complete the [Comirnaty 10 micrograms/dose vaccine-specific e-learning module and assessment](#), be competent at working with children and managing anxiety, have an understanding of the law regarding consent for this cohort and have watched the "[Introduction to Level 3 Safeguarding Children \(COVID-19 Vaccination\)](#)" video (as a minimum). Non-clinical staff do not need to complete this training.
- Clinical leads need to understand the impact of the environment on the child and be empowered to make necessary adjustments. See page 25 of the [workforce guidance](#) for links to supportive training materials and resources.

2. NEW: Shelf-life extension at frozen storage conditions (-25°C to -15°C) has been approved for Spikevax® (also known as COVID-19 Vaccine Moderna)

Moderna Biotech Spain S.L. has approved a shelf-life extension for Spikevax® vaccine when stored at frozen conditions (-25 °C to -15 °C). Frozen vials of

Spikevax® vaccine manufactured before February 2022 and with listed expiry dates up to August 2022 can be stored for 9 months as opposed to 7 months.

Full details are in the letter from Moderna Biotech Spain SL, a copy of which has been sent with this communication or can be viewed [here](#).

Spikevax® vaccine is supplied thawed to all Covid-19 vaccination sites and if the extension is applicable, it will be applied by our Specialist Pharmaceutical Logistics (SPLs) Partners prior to delivery to sites. **Sites do not need to take any further action.** The first deliveries to sites with this extension applied will be made from 21 April 2022 onwards.

As a result of the 2-month frozen shelf-life extension, sites may find that the thawed expiry date at 2°C to 8°C on the carton label is later than the expiry date printed on the vial of vaccine. **Please be assured that the vaccine is safe to use until the expiry date on the carton label.**

For example: The thaw label on the carton could say Exp: 03.06.2022, but the vial inside the carton might say Exp: 03/04/2022

Sites are not permitted to extend the shelf-life of any Spikevax® vaccine already held on-site. The existing expiry date on the thaw label on the carton must be followed.

All vials and cartons labelled by Moderna Biotech S.L. with an expiry date beyond August 2022 will already reflect the 9-month frozen shelf-life and no further action will need to be taken by the NHS or its partners.

3. UPDATED: Cohort Eligibility and Operational Status

[This resource](#) has been reviewed. There are a two simple updates to this week's edition, including an additional hyperlink to the legal mechanisms webpages and a highlight of an existing note regarding Spring Boosters: "Someone in an eligible group who has received a full course of primary vaccination (two or three doses) but has not received their initial booster before 21st March 2022, may be given a spring booster at 91 days from the previous dose. An additional dose is not then recommended before autumn."

4. NEW: Overseas Vaccination Record Validation Service

Please can all Vaccination Centres with the Overseas Service ensure they are submitting the Overseas Data Template to VDRS on the day. If any sites have previous Data Template forms that they have not yet submitted to VDRS please contact m.sonnen@nhs.net to discuss.

5. NEW: Advanced notification of vaccination cohort invites

5-11-year-old Invites: Invites for 9-11 year olds landed last week. Invites for 7- 8 year-olds land on people's door mats this week. Looking ahead, invites for 5-6-year-olds will land next week. Sites are asked to increase NBS and LBS capacity to ensure equitable access outside of school hours and accommodate the increase in local demand for all children-aged cohorts and, promote available capacity in family clinics.

Spring Boosters: Invites will continue for those eligible for spring boosters this week, including reminders for those eligible and over the age of 16 years. Regional leads are asked to continue to plan activity with sites to accommodate the demand for spring boosters vaccinations whilst ensuring capacity is maintained for housebound people and care homes.

6. NEW: COVID-19 vaccination during the perinatal period and for women of child-bearing age guide

Data continues to show variations in COVID-19 vaccination uptake among women of child-bearing age and during the perinatal period. Uptake is lowest among women in Black African, and Black African Caribbean, Bangladeshi and Pakistani communities, and those living in the country's most deprived areas.

This [guide](#), produced by the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme Equalities team, aligns with our Core20PLUS5 approach to reducing healthcare inequalities and is aimed at helping staff to provide COVID-19 vaccination as part of a cross-system approach to ensure all mothers and babies receive safe, high-quality care.

7. NEW: The Lowdown on the COVID-19 vaccine, periods and fertility: Your questions answered

The Lowdown, in partnership with NHS England and NHS Improvement, sat down with Reproductive Immunologist Dr Viki Male, and Consultant Obstetrician & Gynaecologist Dr Fatima Husain, to discuss the latest research on the COVID-19 vaccine, fertility and periods.

This [guide](#) covers the latest evidence around the vaccine, including information on the main concerns of young women and people who menstruate and the effects of the vaccine on periods and fertility. The guide also discusses other external factors that can affect the menstrual cycle. You can also [watch the webinar](#) for more insight from Dr Viki and Dr Fatima.

Some NHS servers have restricted access to this website, so please view from a mobile device where possible.

8. NEW: Workforce Support and Resources

8a) NEW: Information for vaccination sites that have a '12-15' site in Q-Flow

The National Booking Service (NBS) team are currently working to migrate any separate '12-15' vaccination sites in Q-Flow into a new service line/calendar within the primary site. We will continue to provide you with updates in this Bulletin. In the meantime if you have any questions the NBS Onboarding team are running drop in sessions 13:30-14:00 on Mondays, Wednesdays Fridays - [Click here for NBS Drop In Sessions](#)

8b) NEW: Workforce pod model illustrative example under the National Protocol when considering vaccination of multiple children in a single booth

With three cohorts of children under 17 years of age now eligible for vaccinations, there has been a request from sites to have an option to include part of the workforce pod model that could be used to vaccinate multiple eligible children with a consenting adult. This design of the pod model outlines how this can be delivered to ensure efficiency and throughput are maintained. The national protocol should continue to be the default mechanism for delivery to ensure optimal use of the unregistered workforce.

8c) REMINDER: SJA delivery of Spring Boosters to Care Home Residents

We aim to have offered a Spring Booster to all adult care home residents by 30 June. SJA's care home vaccination service is available to support and augment primary-care and community trust-led services with additional vaccinators and, where requested, vehicle and mobile treatment centre support. This is a significant offer that increase vaccination capacity, speed and reach. Systems are requested to promote and relay details of this funded offer. Requests for SJA support should be made using this [link](#) to the online booking request form.

Bookings for SJA Care Home Service by ICS - 2022

ICS	Bookings
Black Country & West Birmingham	8
BOBW	4
Cheshire & Merseyside	23
Cumbria & The North East	2
Hertfordshire & West Essex	2
Humber Coast & Vale	1
Kent & Medway	1
Mid & South Essex	6

North East London	7
Surrey Heartlands	7
Total	61

8d) REMINDER: SJA moving to a single vaccinator role

From 1 March, former SJA volunteer roles (patient advocate, vaccinator, post vaccination observer) were merged into a single “vaccination volunteer” role. All SJA volunteers are now offered training that enables their flexible utilisation across all settings, including in the vaccination of children. Evidence of training and competency (see [SJA Vaccinator Guidance](#)) is recorded in each SJA vaccination volunteer’s Learning Passport. SJA continues to increase its deployment of bespoke services, including assistance to primary care-led delivery of Spring Boosters to housebound and care home residents, and also to supporting the vaccination of children (including aged 5-11 years old). Additional fixed site and mobile support is also available from SJA. Regions and systems are encouraged to advertise the benefits of these funded services, to optimise the utilisation of SJA vaccination volunteers, applying the National Protocol, to reduce demands on registered workforce. Requests for SJA support should be submitted using the online [SJA Service Request Form](#), which will be auto-forwarded to regional SJA coordinators for action.

8e) REMINDER: Workforce helpline 0800 015 7707 – live

To support the workforce challenges facing vaccination sites, a COVID-19 vaccination workforce helpline was established in January 2022 to assist sites and enable the resolution of workforce challenges, which are stopping sites being able to deliver vaccination.

All sites should have contacted their lead employer in the first instance to support with workforce prior to contacting the supply helpline. Lead employer details can be found [here](#)

8f) REMINDER: Community pharmacy toolkit

Community pharmacies continue to play an ever-increasing role in support of the delivery of the COVID-19 and flu vaccination programme. An operational toolkit is designed for community pharmacy leads to use as a practical guide that:

- supports the implementation of the national protocol as recommended legal mechanism of delivery, outlining the key benefits and how it can be maximised
- addresses common challenges around the operating model and provides alternative solutions to support optimisation of workforce and flow

- details the workforce support available from the lead employer
- provides guidance on how community pharmacies can access draw down from national workforce supply routes to access volunteers

8g) REMINDER: FutureNHS page for raising IT issues

The Vaccination Service Desk have a [page on FutureNHS](#) designed to support front-line staff and members to report tech and data issues for:

- Pinnacle
- Vaccination records
- National Immunisation Vaccination System (NIVS)
- Foundry
- National Booking System or Q-Flow
- MYS
- Other tech and data queries.

Please encourage staff to visit this page and select the nature of their query to view the information required by the Vaccination Service Desk team. Send this to us via email at vaccineservicedesk@england.nhs.uk.

Using these templates will ensure that your issues or query are dealt with efficiently.

8h) REMINDER: Pinnacle Site Admin queries

We would like to remind our colleagues and front-line staff that they should, in the first instance, contact their site admins when calling about the following Pinnacle queries or issues.

- User has not received Pinnacle log in details (post 48 hours Go Live) *If site is not within the 48 hours Go Live date.
- Unable to access account.
- Request for new account.
- Forgotten Password.
- Permissions within Account, i.e., User cannot access a certain area within Pinnacle that they should have access to, or their role is set incorrectly (unable to see service tab for instance).
- User is not a site admin and would like to run a report.
- Existing User requires password reset and has access to their emails.

- Existing User requires password reset and is not aware of what their security word is.
- Security word reset.

Please encourage staff to visit this page for information required for users of the Outcomes4Health

Solution (Pinnacle) : Help - Outcomes4Health [Home Page - Outcomes4Health](#)

8i) NEW: Share feedback on the vaccination experience at your site

The NHS Vaccinations Programme is looking for site staff to help us learn more about the technology and systems that you use day to day.

This survey takes approximately 5-10 minutes to complete and your help will allow us to learn about the needs of people using the service and how it can be improved.

Interested in taking part? Make sure you **complete the survey by next week** as the survey will be closing soon.

To take part please complete [this survey](#).

9. NEW: Shared Learning, Webinars and Case Studies

9a) NEW: Sharing Good Practice and Local Stories

Thanks to all of those who have shared their inspiring work during the past few months. With so much happening in the news, it is more important than ever that we keep finding and sharing examples of human interest stories about those getting vaccinated, and working or volunteering to support vaccinations, as well as good and promising practice in sites. As well as sharing these across the Programme or promoting them externally, we can use this learning to inform future work across the NHS. Please send any good examples to england.vaccination-comms@nhs.net.

9b) NEW: Case study - Use of the National Protocol to support innovation in delivery models

The National Protocol is the preferred legal mechanism for delivery of the COVID-19 vaccination programme as it allows the tasks of the vaccination process to be broken down into component parts, which allows for greater skill mix of the workforce. This includes unregistered workforce who can dilute, draw up and administer the vaccinations under the national protocol, releasing registered health care professionals to support other key NHS services.

It also supports innovative delivery models such as a **pre-consent questionnaire** being sent out via text message prior to attendance at the vaccination site. A blended model of registered consenters/vaccinators and registered consenters/non-registered vaccinators helped Southampton Central PCN increase capacity and throughput, reduce costs and improve their patient experience.

You can read more about their experience [here](#).

9c) UPDATED: Case studies

The COVID-19 Vaccination Programme Improvement Hub publishes [case studies](#) to share learning and improvement work across the programme.

If you have an improvement or shared learning case study you would like to share, please email c6.cag@nhs.net.

9d) NEW: Case study - Use of the National Protocol to support innovation in delivery models

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You can read more about their experience [here](#).

Please also contact your lead employer if you need additional workforce and see our NHS Futures pages LVS Workforce and the recently published NHS guidance for PCN groupings and community pharmacy and FAQs. Please do get in touch with the national workforce team direct if you need any further assistance via PCNCP.workforceescalation@nhs.net

9e) UPDATED: Webinars

Vaccination programme shared learning community webinar

The recording of the webinar from the 20 April '**Supporting Immunosuppressed: Spring Boosters**' will be available on the [Improvement Hub](#).

The next learning community webinar will be held on Tuesday 3 May 3pm-4pm and will focus on '**Data latency**'. Please see the [Improvement Hub calendar](#) for further details and registration link shortly.

Previous Learning Community Webinars can be accessed on the [Improvement Hub](#).

9f) UPDATED: Learning

Online course for process improvement coming soon

A free online course helping health and care staff to improve processes to free up clinical time and reduce avoidable delays is to open soon.

The [Lean Fundamentals](#) online programme is the first of its kind in the NHS. It introduces foundational Lean concepts and tools through a practical, structured learning-in-action approach that can be applied immediately.

The programme, led by NHS England and NHS Improvement, has been developed by experienced Lean practitioners and technology-enhanced-learning experts. It comprises six, one-hour content modules available 24/7 over an eight-week period to support operational managers to implement rapid process improvement in dynamic situations.

The course will be running from 9 May to 3 July.

To participate in the course, you will need to be registered on our [QI Learning Platform](#) and enrolled on the course.

9g) REMINDER: Useful Links

General queries email: england.pccovidvaccine@nhs.net

LVS and Roving SOP Publications:

Standard Operating Procedure for mobile and roving models (updated 7 October 2021) [here](#)

Standard Operating Procedure for Local Vaccination Services (updated 8 October 2021) [here](#)

Phase 3 FAQs:

[Phase 3 FAQs for GPs / PCN-led sites](#)

[FAQs Pharmacy-led Phase 3 LVS](#)

Press notice: [Press notice: JCVI issues advice on third vaccination for severely immunosuppressed](#)

JCVI full advice: [JCVI advice on third dose for severely immunosuppressed](#)

Clinical updates: you can find all clinical updates [here](#)

[Coronavirus vaccinations](#): NHS Digital helps you access up-to-date information, training and onboarding guides related to the tech and data solutions that are supporting the COVID-19 and seasonal flu vaccination programmes.

[COVID-19 Vaccination Programme workspace](#) provides members with access to key documents, resources, webinar recordings, case studies and past copies of the LVS Updates. There is also a discussion forum for members. If you are not already a member, please email: P_C_N-manager@future.nhs.uk

[COVID-19 Vaccine Equalities Connect and Exchange Hub](#) is a community of practices on the Future NHS platform. NHS, local authority, public and voluntary sector staff working to increase vaccine uptake, share ideas, evidence, resources, case studies and blueprints to increase uptake of the COVID19 vaccine within all communities. Members also have access to peer-to-peer support and a programme of regular lunch and learn webinars and live discussion forums. To join, please [register for an account](#) and once registered you can [join the Hub](#).

[Supply and Delivery Hub](#) helps you access key information in a timely way and help support you to deliver your local vaccination service. Here you will find the latest delivery information (vaccine and vaccine consumables as well as non-vaccine consumables, equipment and PPE), alongside the latest supply chain and customer service FAQs and other helpful information.

National Workforce Support Offer – more details:

- [National Workforce Support Offer Toolkit](#) provides more detail about the National Workforce Support Offer and is a practical guide for local vaccination service leads.
- Contact your [Lead Employer](#) to access the National Offer and additional staff and vaccinators, as well as support with your workforce needs.
- For more details, please see our Futures NHS pages [LVS Workforce](#) and [case studies/FAQs](#) and recently guidance for [PCN groupings](#) and [community pharmacy](#)
- Contact the national workforce team direct via [COVID-19 Vaccination Improvement Hub](#)