

ICARS Newsletter

Immunisation Clinical Advice & Response Service



Issue 92: 17th June 2022

PLEASE SHARE THIS NEWSLETTERS WITH ALL RELEVANT STAFF INVOLVED WITH THE VACCINATION PROGRAMME

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

Please note that this service operates 9am-5pm Monday to Friday

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UPDATE: Disregarded travel vaccination information from previous Clinical Bulletin / ICARS newsletter

Please note that we have been advised that the article regarding travel and vaccinations has been removed from the final version of last week's bulletin. Please therefore disregard this information.

The latest/final version of the clinical bulletin can be found here:

<https://future.nhs.uk/CovidVaccinations/view?objectId=136483653>

And please find the final version of the ICAR Newsletter Issue 91 here:



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Our clinical team have advised.

1. *The advice in last week's clinical bulletin has been withdrawn and our existing guidance is unchanged.*
2. *In the very small minority of cases where additional doses are needed to enter a country, individuals should follow rules around testing +/- quarantine to enable entry.*
3. *Travel is not a valid reason for shortening the interval between doses.*

NEW: Met Office Weather Warning – Friday 17th June

The Met Office has issued a Level 2 heat-health alert from midnight on Friday until midnight on Sunday. Temperatures to reach 30°C in some parts of the South during Friday 17th June.

To support staff and members of the public attending for their vaccinations in the heat. Please consider appropriate measures for maintaining temperature control for vaccine preparation and administration areas.

Tips for keeping working areas cool:

- Close window fittings, particularly if windows are sun facing
- Open windows when the outside temperature is cooler than indoors
- Switch electrical equipment to standby or off completely if not required. Turn off non-essential equipment at night (DO NOT switch off any vaccine storage units)
- Check that the site heating is not still running (consideration for sites with central facilities & estates controls)

- Ensure thermometers are placed in all vaccine storage, preparation and administration areas
- Please be mindful that cooling fans to support staff/patient comfort circulate warm air and do not lower the environment temperature to support storage of vaccines.

Vaccines must be stored and used within temperatures specified by the manufacturer and MHRA-authorized conditions of use, to ensure their safety, quality and efficacy.

During the summer, there is an increased risk of temperatures in ambient areas rising above 25°C. The maximum permissible storage temperatures for all the COVID-19 vaccines are as below:

- 1- Pfizer (Comirnaty®) : < 30°C.
- 2- Moderna (Spikevax ®) : < 25°C
- 3- Astra Zeneca (Vaxzevria ®): < 25°C

For further information about using COVID-19 vaccines during hot weather the Specialist Pharmacy Service has updated information available through [this link](#). As part of the clinic session risk assessment, sites should consider a contingency plan for management of vaccines in hotter areas. An appropriate escalation plans should be discussed and reviewed with your lead pharmacist to prevent patient safety incidents and mitigate wastage.

Any cold chain and clinical incidents need to be reported to ICARS (see the Standard Operating Procedure: Management of COVID-19 vaccination clinical incidents and enquires ([link attached](#)))

Contact the ICARS team via email: england.swicars@nhs.net

NEW: UKHSA COVID-19 Spring Vaccine Update

UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) have published the COVID-19 Spring special vaccine update. The bulletin includes information on Autumn COVID-19 boosters, successes and challenges, maximising uptake throughout the programme and resources. Read the full June issue [here](#).

NEW: Vaccinating Rising 75-year olds and 65-year olds in a care home

Please find below the reply from the National Team via ICARS, with clarification on when to vaccinate the rising 75-year olds and rising 65-year olds in a Care Home.

“The Spring campaign aims to offer booster vaccine doses to (amongst others) people who are aged 75 years or over by the end of June. The call/recall system is based on the date of turning 75 years so we do not anticipate that all eligible people will have had

the opportunity to get vaccinated by the end of June. Similarly, some individuals may have contracted Covid after being invited and therefore have had to delay their booster appointment accordingly.

On this basis, people who were aged 75 years or over by the end of June remain eligible to receive their booster dose at any time over the summer. As noted in the enquiry, it may be clinically justified to delay the booster until the autumn when the prevalence of Covid may increase, but that decision would need to be made by a suitably experienced vaccinator after considering the balance of risks and benefits for each individual, and for them to give fully informed consent.

People who turn 75 years after 30 June will not be eligible for a booster vaccination until the autumn campaign starts. We are still waiting for confirmation as to how that will be defined and apologise for not being able to provide further details at present.”

We hope that this provides clarity for you and please do not hesitate to contact england.swcovid19-voc1@nhs.net or england.swicars@nhs.net if you have any further queries.

NEW: Identifying and Inviting or Signposting People who are Immunosuppressed for the COVID-19 Spring Booster

A national system letter to clinicians was published on 13 June. It sets out additional urgent steps to ensure that all remaining immunosuppressed people aged 12 years and over are identified and offered a booster during the Spring Campaign, providing it has been at least three months since the previous dose.

The current immunosuppressed cohort list held in the COVID-19 GP Dashboard has been refreshed. Primary care clinicians have been asked to utilise the PRIMIS search function held within GP IT systems to undertake local searches to identify and invite eligible immunosuppressed individuals for spring boosters by 27 June. Secondary care clinicians have been asked to contact any immunosuppressed individuals identified through locally held lists and those patients who they have regular contact with, to inform them of their eligibility.

This letter sent to GP practices this week asking them to identify and invite immunosuppressed patients for COVID 19 Spring Booster vaccinations is also attached here but also these links:



C1661_Identifying
and inviting or sign|

The system letter can be found here: [link](#)

Further to queries regarding GPIT and PRIMIS searches please find attached some supplementary guidance for GPs that has been developed to support the undertaking of these searches on TPP, EMIS and Vision.



PRIMIS
immunosuppression :

PRIMIS immunosuppression search guidance is also available [here](#).

NEW: Notification of vaccination invites, prompts and reminders due this week

The below notifications are due to arrive in the current period. Sites are asked to load NBS and LBS appointment slots and walk-in capacity to accommodate potential increases in demand, ensuring adequate capacity outside of school hours for younger cohorts.

Evergreens 5-15

58k letters to arrive on 17 June

2nd Dose prompts 18+, and 16-17 Not At Risk including Severely Immunosuppressed

Circa 36k SMS to arrive on 16 June and letters to arrive on 18 June

Boosters 16+

Circa 75k SMS and emails to arrive on 20 June and letters to arrive 22 June

Evergreens 16+

59k letters to arrive on 16 June

Spring Booster Invites (75+)

137k SMS and emails to arrive 15-16 June and letters to arrive on 17 June

Look ahead (may be subject to amendment):

Spring Booster Invites (75+)

Circa 15k SMS and emails to arrive 21-23 June and letters to arrive on 24 June

2nd dose 16+ reminders

Circa 89k SMS & emails to arrive 21 June and letters to arrive on 24 June

2nd dose 5-15 at risk including severely immunosuppressed

Circa 3.6k emails to arrive 22 June and letters to arrive on 24 June

Boosters 12-15 At Risk including severely immunosuppressed

Circa 3.9K emails to arrive on 24 June

2nd dose 16-17 at risk including severely immunosuppressed

Circa 0.1-0.2k emails to arrive 22 June and letters to arrive on 24 June

4D invite for 16+ severely immunosuppressed

Volumes TBD emails to arrive on 24 June

Boosters 1st and 2nd reminders

Circa <206k SMS and email to arrive on 23 June

NEW: Data Latency

Covid-19 vaccination providers should record details of each Covid-19 vaccination electronically on an authorised Point of Care (PoC) system in real time. Data latency (the delay between an event occurring and a record being created) presents clinical and operational risks to people and the Covid-19 vaccination programme.

As an additional safeguard, PoC systems are being upgraded to prevent primary record creation more than seven days after the vaccination event and go live for implementation is scheduled for the end of August 2022.

Site level review support meetings:

Your regional commissioner may invite you to a site support meeting between 3 - 5pm Mondays commencing fortnightly from 20 June 2022. The purpose is to discuss barriers to real time data entry, agree action plans and identify additional support needs. Regional teams will identify representatives to these meetings.

Good practice guides:

A practical guide to support sites to capture data in real time and reduce data latency can be found [here](#)

NEW: Call for sites to improve User Access Management Practices

Access to Point of Care systems, such as Pinnacle, must be appropriately managed to avoid the risk of misuse.

Site Leads please ensure you are:

1. De-activating leavers and inactive users to ensure only the people that require access and work at the site have it.
2. Limiting the number of superusers per site to a minimum level of trusted individuals by reviewing superusers at your site on an ongoing basis AND deactivating any superuser which is no longer active onsite or required to have superuser privileges.

Regular user access management data will be provided to your regional commissioning teams to flag sites with a large inactive userbase and high superuser access. Should you have any questions or would like support in improving your site user access management, please attend one of the drop-in sessions that run 1:30-2pm on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. [Click here for Drop in Session links](#)

UPDATE: Restricting Site Admins to NHS-approved Email Accounts (Pinnacle)

Site Admins must be trusted individuals as they have privileged access to the system, i.e they are able to create/ delete users. On 9 June, Pinnacle updated its security verification for Site Admins.

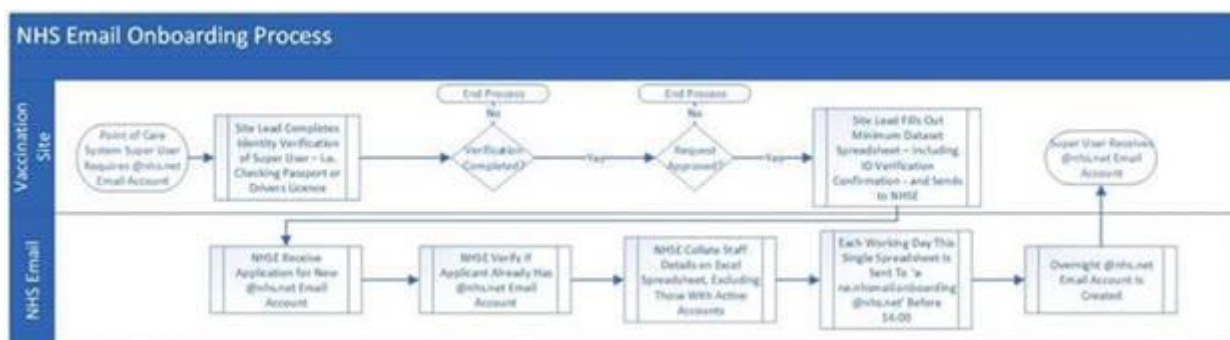
UPDATE: All Site Admins must have one unique and active email address from the following NHS-approved variations: @nhs.net, @[text].nhs.net, @nhs.uk or @[text].nhs.uk to gain privileged access to the system.

Changes for sites:

1. For new Site Admins, the Site Lead must conduct an identification check before an NHS approved email can be allocated and Site Admin privileges can be granted.
2. Existing Site Admins with unapproved email addresses should engage with their Site Leads to get an NHS-approved email account, which will kick-start the procedure outlined below.

Please note, if you are an existing Site Admin with an unapproved email you can no longer conduct security and password resets and you must move to an NHS-approved email before you can re-gain access to the system.

Procedure for an NHS- approved Email



UPDATE: Updated Collaboration Agreement

We have made a minor update to the Collaboration Agreement [here](#), for general practice to work as PCN Groupings in order to take part in the COVID-19 vaccination programme, to enable it to be used from 1 April 2022 to 30 September 2022, the period of the current Enhanced Service specification. This can be used by any practices forming new PCN Groupings or to vary their arrangements in that period.

A Word version is available as well as a PDF version, to enable it to be amended (eg in the various schedules as indicated) with relevant local information.

UPDATE: Changes to the GP Dashboard

The GP dashboard (<https://digital.nhs.uk/dashboards/gp-covid-19-vaccine-dashboard>) may be used by PCNs to help identify patients to be invited for Covid-19 vaccinations including Spring boosters.

The following changes are expected to be made to the GP dashboard on Friday 17 June:

The interval since the last booster dose used to identify both immunosuppressed and over 75 years of age as eligible for Spring boosters will be changed from 182 days to 91 days. The immunosuppressed cohort identified in the GP dashboard (<https://digital.nhs.uk/dashboards/gp-covid-19-vaccine-dashboard/3rd-primary-dose-cohort-identification-specification>) will be refreshed to identify people new to the cohort since October. The refresh of the immunosuppressed cohort now also includes 5-11 year olds, to support the identification of those who may have been severely immunosuppressed at the time of their primary courses and who therefore need a third dose to complete their primary course. Further details on the changes will be provided in the updated user guides for the GP dashboard. Going forward, the GP dashboard will continue to identify immunosuppressed people and over 75 years of age as eligible for an additional booster when they reach 91 days since their last booster doses.

People who have had a booster dose on or after the 21 March 2022 (when the Spring booster period began) should generally not be given another booster dose until we begin giving Autumn boosters. There may be clinical scenarios where an exception is made to this approach. This would include the scenario where a severely immunosuppressed person had a third dose (which is recorded on our systems as a booster dose) to complete their primary course after 21 March and is still due a booster dose (their fourth dose) from 91 days after their last dose. People who turn 75 after 30 June should generally not be given an additional booster dose until we begin giving Autumn boosters.

The rationale for the GP dashboard continuing to identify these people as eligible for an additional booster when they reach 91 days since their last booster, this will enable us identify those people quickly in a surge scenario.

NEW: Case Studies

The COVID-19 Vaccination Programme Improvement Hub publishes case studies to share learning and improvement work across the programme. A summary of all case studies available on the Improvement Hub is available [here](#).

New case studies recently published include [Examples of hospital initiatives to increase vaccination uptake - COVID-19 Vaccination Programme](#) and [How teamwork helped support extremely complex and vulnerable children to be vaccinated](#).

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

NEW: Webinars

A recording of the learning community webinar held on 1 June 'Better Together – Unlocking the Power of Communities' is available to view, along with all previous Learning Community Webinars and supporting resources on the [Improvement Hub](#).

The next learning Community Webinar will be held on Wednesday 29 June, 2pm-3pm.

If you have a suggestion for a future Webinar subject, please email c6.cag@nhs.net.

REMINDER: Useful Links

Ops Notes:

You can find all the latest operational notes on FutureNHS:

[LVS Operational Notes](#)

[VC Operational Notes](#)

Communications Resources:

You can find [communications resources](#) on FutureNHS including our latest toolkits on [spring boosters](#), [5-15 year olds](#), [people at greater clinical risk](#), [pregnant women](#) and [perinatal](#) health equalities.

Clinical Updates:

See the latest [clinical updates](#).

Other Resources:

[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 practice on the FutureNHS platform, where NHS, local authority, public and voluntary sector staff share ideas, evidence, resources, case studies and blueprints to increase vaccine uptake in all communities.

Members also have access to peer-to-peer support and a programme of regular 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 PCNCP.workforceescalation@nhs.net

[COVID-19 Vaccination Improvement Hub](#)

NHS England and NHS Improvement
South West

