

ICARS Newsletter

Immunisation Clinical Advice & Response Service



Issue 91: 10th 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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NEW: Post thaw expiry labels

All mRNA vaccines are currently supplied to sites in a thawed state by the Specialist Pharmaceutical Logistics (SPLs) partners. The SPLs will apply a post thaw expiry label to each carton of vaccines prior to delivery to sites. The label design currently varies between the vaccines and SPLs. The original manufacturer's expiry date (which is the shelf life of the

product when stored in frozen conditions) will either be crossed out or labelled over on the carton by the SPLs. To maintain the integrity of the cartons, the vials inside the cartons will not have post thaw expiry labels added by the SPLs, therefore these will state the original manufacturer's expiry date until the site is preparing the product for use.

It is always the thawed expiry date at 2°C to 8°C as displayed on the post thaw expiry label on the carton that must be adhered to whilst the products remain in appropriate cold storage. If this date has passed, the product has expired and must be disposed of immediately in line with the site's usual expired vaccine disposal procedure.

Sites must not retain expired vaccine. As described in the [Bulletin dated 1 April](#), there are no more nationally organised collections of expired vaccines and sites are therefore advised to dispose of expired vaccines immediately as per their usual process and complete the relevant actions via Site Stock Manager on Foundry as soon as possible. This best practice will ensure that the **risk of administering expired vaccine is minimised**, as well as maintaining accurate stock data.

As a result of updates to the manufacturer's frozen shelf life (see Item 2 of the Clinical Bulletin dated 1 April for [Comirnaty 10 micrograms/dose Concentrate for Children 5-11 years](#), see Item 2 of the Clinical Bulletin dated 20 April for [Spikevax](#), and see item 2 of this Bulletin for Comirnaty 30 micrograms/dose Concentrate for Adults and Adolescents), the post thaw expiry date on the carton may be later than the original manufacturer's expiry date printed on the vials. If the vaccine has been stored correctly, the vaccine is safe to use until the expiry date on the post thaw expiry label detailed on the carton and should be disposed of once the site reaches the end of vaccination activity on this date.

The post thaw expiry date for **unpunctured vials stored at 2°C to 8°C** does not need to be tracked to the hour, it can be rounded up to the end of that day.

NEW: Shelf-life update for Comirnaty® 30 micrograms / dose Concentrate for Adults and Adolescents

As detailed in this [Operational Note](#), a new shelf-life at Ultra-Low Temperature storage conditions (-90 °C to -60 °C) has been approved for Comirnaty® 30 micrograms/dose Concentrate for Adults and Adolescents, changing from 9 months to 12 months.

Full details are in the [letter from Pfizer-BioNTech here](#) and further information can be viewed at [this Specialist Pharmacy Service page](#).

The 3-month shelf-life update can also be applied retrospectively to batches which have been stored appropriately before thawing (see table below). Comirnaty® 30 micrograms/dose Concentrate for Adults and Adolescents is supplied thawed to all COVID-19 vaccination sites and therefore if the extension is applicable, it will be applied by the Specialist Pharmaceutical Logistics (SPLs) Partners prior to delivery to sites. **Sites do not need to take any further action.**

Table showing the impact of the update to the shelf-life expiry dates:

Printed Frozen Expiry Date	Updated Frozen Expiry Date
June 2022	September 2022
July 2022	October 2022
August 2022	November 2022
September 2022	December 2022
October 2022	January 2023
November 2022	February 2023
December 2022	March 2023

The first deliveries to sites with this extension applied will be made from 7th June 2022.

As a result of the frozen shelf-life extension, sites may find that the post thaw expiry date at 2°C to 8°C on the carton label is later than the expiry date printed on the vial of vaccine. For example: the thaw label on the carton could say Exp: 08.07.2022, but the vial inside the carton might say Exp: 06/2022. **The vaccine is safe to use until the expiry date on the post thaw expiry label on the carton.**

Please note: It is always the thawed expiry date at 2°C to 8°C as displayed on the post thaw label on the carton that must be adhered to.

Sites are not permitted to extend the shelf-life of any Comirnaty® 30 micrograms/dose Concentrate for Adults and Adolescents vaccine already held on-site. The existing expiry date on the thaw label on the carton must be followed.

The allowed 1-month storage and transportation at 2 °C to 8 °C remains unchanged and the product must be used within the 12-month extended frozen expiry date.

All vials and cartons labelled by Pfizer-BioNTech with a shelf-life date beyond March 2023 will already reflect the 12-month frozen shelf-life and no further action will need to be taken by the NHS or its partners.

NEW: Summary of Product Characteristics (SPC) update: Comirnaty 10 micrograms/dose concentrate for children 5-11 years

The SPC for this product has been [updated](#). There is in-use stability data that suggests the diluted product is stable for up to 12 hours at 2 °C to 30 °C which includes up to 6 hours of transportation time.

SPS will be updating the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to reflect this vaccine handling update. The SOPs can be found [here](#).

NEW: Cohort Eligibility and Operational Status

[This resource](#) has been reviewed. There have been small amendments to highlight the changes to Spring Booster invitation scheduling (detailed in Item 2 of the [Clinical Bulletin dated 26 May](#)) and to include details about third primary doses for 5-11 year olds who were severely immunosuppressed at the time of their first or second dose.

This resource will next be reviewed during the week commencing 20 June, therefore the validity period stated on the document covers a two-week timeframe.

NEW: Non-Clinical IT equipment

Throughout the Vaccination Programme, all non-clinical IT equipment (Laptops, IPADs, Desktops, Monitors, Printers, 4G Routers and Barcode Scanners) and licences have been procured and distributed by NHS England and NHS Improvement. These assets remain under the ownership of NHS EI.

The Non-Clinical IT team (NCIT) are responsible for ensuring the proper accounting of all Non-Clinical IT computer equipment which has been supplied to every Vaccination site or team.

As sites close and the devices are no longer needed for the Vaccination programme, the Non-Clinical IT team will arrange to collect all NCIT kit.

NEW: Information for vaccination sites with a '12-15' site in Q-Flow

The National Booking Service (NBS) team will be migrating all separate '12-15' vaccination sites in Q-Flow to the associated primary site (if applicable) during the week commencing 6 June. Site Managers will find a new vaccine service line/calendar in the diary manager of the primary site called '*Pfizer-BioNTech (12-15)*' (see an example in the image below).



Following the migration, the separate 12-15 sites will no longer be in use. Please note that users of the [Check a vaccination service/Check In app](#) will only need to log into the primary site to check in appointments for all calendars and will no longer need to use the separate '12-15' site. There will be no action required from sites as all availability and bookings from the 12-15 site will be transferred to the new calendar.

If you experience any issues or have any questions the NBS Onboarding team are running drop in sessions 13:30-14:00 on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays - [Click here for NBS Drop In Sessions](#)

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

The below notifications are due to arrive in the current period. Sites are asked 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.

- 2nd Dose prompts 5-15 Not at Risk
Circa 165K letters to arrive on 11 June
- 2nd Dose prompts 5-15 At Risk including Severely Immunosuppressed
Circa 3.9K emails to arrive on 8 June and letters to arrive on 10 June
- Boosters 12-15 At Risk including Severely Immunosuppressed
Circa 5K emails to arrive on 10 June and letters to arrive on 13 June
- 2nd Dose prompts 16-17 At Risk including Severely Immunosuppressed
Circa 0.2K emails to arrive on 8 June and letters to arrive on 10 June
- Boosters 16+
Circa 90K SMS and emails to arrive on 10 June and letters to arrive 13 June
- Boosters 1st and 2nd Reminders
Circa 235K SMS and emails arrive on 7 June and letters on 10 June
- Spring Boosters 2nd Reminders
Circa 187K letters to arrive on 6 June
- Spring Booster Invites (75+)
Circa 13.4K SMS and emails to arrive 6-9 June and letters to arrive on 10 June
- Spring Booster 16+ Learning Difficulties and Severely Immunosuppressed
Circa 0.1K letters to arrive on 6 June

Look ahead (may be subject to amendment):

- 1st Dose 5-15 Evergreen
Circa 69k letters to arrive on 18 June
- 16+ Evergreen
Circa 59k letters to arrive on 18 June
- 2nd Dose prompts 18+ and 16/17 Not at Risk
Circa 37k SMS to arrive on 17 June

- [Spring Booster Reminder](#)
Circa 225K letters to arrive on 18 June
- [Spring Booster Invites \(75+\)](#)
Circa 20K-100K SMS and emails to arrive 13-16 June and letters to arrive on 17 June

NEW: Data latency: A guide on good practice for capturing vaccine data in real time

The COVID-19 Vaccination Programme has published a practical guide to support sites to capture data in real time and reduce data latency. It brings together insights and feedback from sites across the country from a wide range of delivery models and contains team structures as well as practical hints and tips that can be considered and incorporated into your own processes to facilitate real time data entry. View the guide [here](#).

REMINDER: 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 are available including [Delivering General Practice resilience at scale](#), [Gloucestershire Outreach Programme](#), and [Refreshing local communications for delivering COVID vaccination services for the Immunosuppressed cohort Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin Integrated Care System \(ICS\)](#).

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

NEW: Webinars

Vaccination programme shared learning community webinar

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

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, and a set of [poster graphics](#) for sites showing who is eligible for what doses.

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 FutureNHS 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

NHS England and NHS Improvement South West

