

ICARS Newsletter

Immunisation Clinical Advice & Response Service



Issue 98: 29th July 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: MPX and COVID-19 Vaccine Updates

1. MPX Stock Take

Following the RVOC cascade last week, there have been some queries regarding the MPX Stock Take.



RVOC have been able to confirm that:

- The stock take takes place on IMMFORM not Foundry. **Guidance attached.**
- It is required by **COP every Thursday** (as they are running the report at 9am Fridays)

If you have any further queries please do not hesitate to contact RVOC (england.swcovid19-voc1@nhs.net).

Many thanks for all your continued support.

2. Withdrawal of Vaxzevria (AZ) COVID 19 vaccination

Vaxzevria®, AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine will be withdrawn from the programme at the end of August. All stock expires 31.08.22

Vaxzevria® AstraZeneca (AZ) COVID-19 vaccine will be removed from the programme at the end of August. **All stock within the system expires 31.08.22.** Further information relating to switching to an alternative non mRNA vaccine is expected to be provided through the clinical bulletin w/c 1st August (additional supporting publication also expected).

The preferred choice product switch will be [Nuvaxovid®, Novavax, COVID-19 \(recombinant, adjuvanted\) vaccine](#) but cross sensitivity with related compound excipients to polyethylene glycol (PEG- also known as macrogols) should be considered as part of clinical allergy risk assessment ([SPS Decision Tool](#)). Nuvaxovid® contains polysorbate 80 which is a related PEG compound. Withdrawal of Vaxzevria® is expected to have low impact and further information around the supply of Nuvaxovid® will be provided through the clinical bulletin.



(example carton)



To phase out operational use of Vaxzevria® stock all local sites should ensure that any *first dose offers* are given on or before 3rd August to support a reduced 4-week interval for second dose offer on or before 31st August.

No further stock will be available beyond 31st August. Remaining stock locally should be reported via the stock return process and disposed of appropriately (further information will be available in the clinical bulletin).

3. Comirnaty® 10 microgram/dose Concentrate for Children will be delivered with a reduced shelf-life until week commencing 15 August

All Comirnaty® 10 microgram/dose Concentrate for Children vaccine (Comirnaty® 10) delivered into vaccination sites up until the **18 August** will have a shorter thawed shelf-life than usual. These will expire **on or before 31 August**. No stock with less than 14 days thawed shelf-life will be delivered to sites.

This reduction is due to our supply chain awaiting the implementation of a new frozen shelf-life update for Comirnaty® 10. Full details of this new frozen shelf-life update will be released to sites in the coming weeks together with the 'Dear Health Care Professional' letter from Pfizer-BioNTech.

To mitigate wastage going forward, please plan your Comirnaty® 10 vaccine orders, considering the shorter shelf life for the next couple of weeks.

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 when using the vaccine. If this date has passed, the product has expired. It must be disposed of immediately in line with your site's expired vaccine disposal procedure. The relevant reporting actions must be completed via Site Stock Manager as soon as possible. This will ensure that the risk of administering expired vaccine is minimised, as well as maintaining accurate stock data.

Sites are not permitted to update the shelf-life of any Comirnaty® 10 micrograms/dose Concentrate for Children vaccine.

NEW: Effective Cold Chain Management of COVID-19 vaccines

With the potential for further hot weather this summer, NHSE encourage all sites to review their cold chain management processes. This is to safeguard the quality and efficacy of vaccines, as well as to minimise the risk of vaccine wastage.

Vaccination sites can access useful guidance from the Specialist Pharmacy Service to support cold chain management for COVID-19 vaccines. This includes specific guidance on [using COVID-19 vaccines during hot weather](#). The [Green Book \(Chapter 3\)](#) also provides detailed guidance for maintaining the vaccine cold chain.

The COVID-19 vaccination programme [self-audit tool](#) is available to help sites assess current practice. Sites can then identify the improvements required to meet the standards for effective cold chain management processes. This includes during periods of higher ambient temperatures.

NEW: Cohort Eligibility and Operational Status

[Cohort Eligibility operational Status](#) has been reviewed. The system letter regarding [COVID-19 autumn booster and flu vaccine programme expansion](#) has been highlighted. This resource will

next be reviewed during the week commencing 8 August, therefore the validity period stated on the document covers a two-week timeframe.

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. This will ensure adequate capacity outside of school hours for younger cohorts.

25 – 27 July:

16+ Booster 1st and 2nd Reminders (29th May – 11th June 2nd reminders, 12th June – 25th June 1st reminders)

20k letters to arrive 25 July

12-15 (At Risk) Booster 1st and 2nd reminders (28th Jan – 11th June 2nd reminders, 12th June – 25th June 1st reminders)

38k letters to arrive 25 July

2nd Dose Prompts 18+ DMS Digital

2.4k SMS and e-mails to arrive 25 July

Evergreen 18+ DMS Digital

10k SMS and e-mail to arrive 25 July

Boosters 18+ DMS Digital

18k SMS and e-mails to arrive 26 July

2D Prompts 5-15 Non at Risk

93k letters to arrive 27 July

28 July – 01 August:

Boosters 16+ and 12-15 at Risk

Circa 54k SMS and e-mail to arrive 28 July and letters 30 July

Evergreens 16+ Learning Disabled

15 letters to arrive 28 July

Evergreens 5+

64k letters to arrive 28 July

4th Dose invite for 12+ SI/S

Circa 700 e-mails to arrive 27 July and letters 29 July

Overdue 2nd Dose reminder for 12-15 (At Risk & Non-At Risk) + 5-11 At Risk

Circa 44k SMS and e-mail to arrive 28 July and letters to arrive 30 July

Spring booster reminder (Batches 296, 298)

Circa <25k SMS and e-mail to arrive 28 July and letters 30 July

2nd Dose overdue 16+ reminders (three times max)

Circa 37k SMS and e-mail to arrive 28 July and letters 30 July

2nd Dose Prompts 18+ and 16/17 Not at risk

Circa 13k SMS to arrive 29 July and letters 01 August

Look ahead (*may be subject to amendment*):

Vaccine Data Resolution Service (VDRS)

Circa 1k letters to arrive 01 August

2nd Dose Prompts 5-15 Non at Risk

Circa 109k letters to arrive 03 August

Shingles

6k letters to arrive 03 August

2nd Dose Prompts 5-17 at Risk including Severely Immunosuppressed

Circa 1.7k e-mails to arrive 03 August and letters 05 August

12-15 (At Risk) & 16+ Booster 1st and 2nd reminders (12th June – 25th June 2nd reminders, 26th June – 9th July 1st reminders)

Circa 143k SMS and e-mails to arrive 04 August and letters 08 August

NEW: Identification of people who are Immunosuppressed - Evidence and prompting permissive approach

The identification of people who are immunosuppressed remains important to ensure that this population receive all their required vaccinations. To support the identification of people who are immunosuppressed (noting that because of their clinical condition they may move in and out of this group), NHSE are using data held within both primary and secondary care but it is not always complete. This is despite an enormous amount of work to ensure its timeliness and accuracy.

Through the customer contact centre and 119 responses, NHSE are aware that some people who consider they are immunosuppressed or have received an invitation to receive a vaccination/booster, are unfortunately being turned away from vaccination sites. This is because they are not considered eligible and / or they are not able to provide the relevant clinical evidence.

Please be reminded of the [15 March operational note](#) advising adopting a permissive approach to vaccination for those who are immunosuppressed.

The key points are:

Evidence to show eligibility: From 21 March, information for the public was updated to simplify the evidence for those who are immunosuppressed to show their eligibility when they arrive for their appointment:

- a specific communication from the GP or specialist stating their eligibility; or
- other forms of evidence to confirm their condition or medication including a hospital letter that describes the condition or the immunosuppressive medication that's been prescribed, a copy of a prescription, or a medication box with a patient's name and a date on it.

Supporting those without appropriate evidence: If the person attending their vaccination appointment is not able to provide suitable evidence to confirm their condition, a conversation with an appropriate clinician must take place to confirm that the individual is eligible. An appropriate clinician would include healthcare professionals who are familiar with medicines and treatments that cause immunosuppression and are able to understand a patient's medical history. Ideally this conversation should take place on site.

If a clinical conversation is not possible, or it is not possible to confirm eligibility, please advise the individual to contact their GP or specialist to confirm whether they are eligible for additional boosters ([Template letter to GP or Specialist when unable to vaccinate](#)). Teams should note the [October 21 operational note](#) to support this permissive approach as far as possible to enable people to receive their vaccinations.

NEW: Working in partnership with people and communities

New statutory guidance has been published on [working in partnership with people and communities](#). The guidance for Integrated Care Boards, NHS trusts and foundation trusts and policy teams for NHS England supports them to meet their public involvement legal duties and the new 'triple aim' of better health and wellbeing, improved quality of services and the sustainable use of resources.

NHS staff and volunteers from vaccination sites have done a lot of work in listening to patients and working with communities to understand how to best deliver vaccinations across communities that traditionally have found it difficult to access NHS services. The guidance includes some case studies from vaccination sites and lays out 10 principles for working with people and communities, which build on the positive practice shown throughout the vaccination programme of listening, learning, and understanding the communities we serve.

NEW: Care Home Key Messages

Please find attached Key Messages received from the National Team relating to Care Homes.



Care Home Key
Messages.pptx

RVOC wanted to highlight the JCVI Autumn 2022 guidance. This text would appear to indicate that potentially, we could be looking at a larger cohort to vaccinate in the Autumn and more Care Homes to visit.

RVOC have asked the National Team to clarify their expectations for this cohort.

If you have any questions or queries that you would like RVOC to escalate please contact: england.swcovid19-voc1@nhs.net.

NEW: Workforce and Service Support and Resources

1. Improvement Fundamentals

Are you looking for ways to help improve your services after they've been affected by COVID-19? The [Improvement Fundamentals](#) series of online courses can help.

Improvement Fundamentals is a programme of free, interactive mini courses delivered entirely online in the form of videos, articles, discussion, and practical exercises that contribute to your own improvement project.

The programme starts on Monday 1 August 2022 with the first mini-course 'An Introduction to QI' and will consist of one mini-course each month. Each mini course includes a week of facilitation and ample opportunity for discussion and collaboration with peers and facilitators. It is open for enrolment on the [QI Learning platform](#). If you are a new user, please register on the QI Learning Platform first, and then enrol onto the courses from the home page.

NHS England's Improvement Capability team will respond to any questions and offer their insights in the social spaces on the courses and also give additional information on [Improvement Fundamentals](#).

2. Phase 5 New Site Designations – Offline Questions

As of Monday 18 July, phase 5 new site designation forms went live on the LVS and VC Portal and can be found [here](#). To aid with the completion of the online forms, NVOC have shared editable versions for LVS and VC pillars on FutureNHS [here](#). It is hoped that the excel documents are useful in gathering information about sites to be submitted for designation by regions.

Please note new site designation requests will **not** accepted via the excel documents. Requests need to be uploaded onto the Portal for sites to be designated through the twice weekly meetings. Any forms submitted to via the excel documents will be sent back to regions for uploading onto the Portal.

If you do not have access to FutureNHS, please contact nvoc.comms@nhs.net.

NEW / UPDATES: Learning Resources

1. Case studies

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

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

2. Webinars

A. Vaccination programme shared learning community webinar:

Further information is available on [FutureNHS](#), along with all previous Learning Community Webinars and supporting resources on the [Improvement Hub](#).

B. Improvement Team Evaluation Webinar:

Thank you to all colleagues who have contributed good practices and innovations during our learning community webinars and via other forums. NHSE are now evaluating the impact of this work from October 2021 to June 2022, including:

- Delivering learning community webinars
- Sharing learning through case studies and insights via the [Improvement Hub](#)
- The [QSIR improvement tools](#)
- A WhatsApp peer support group.

It is important for us to hear from you and get your views to help us prepare for autumn. If you could spare a few minutes to provide your feedback via this [short survey](#). We welcome any feedback including what's worked well, areas we could improve and suggestions for future webinar topics by tomorrow (**Friday 29 July**)

3. 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, [seasonal boosters](#), [5-15 year olds](#), [people with a weakened immune system](#) and [pregnant women](#).

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 helps 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

[COVID-19 Vaccination Improvement Hub](#)