

ICARS Newsletter

Immunisation Clinical Advice & Response Service



Issue 109: 13th October 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: Damaged Vaccine Vials

At the National Immunisation Network (NIN) meeting on Friday 7th Oct a number of teams brought up issues of COVID vaccine providers receiving vaccine vials that appeared to have been damaged. These issues should be reported to the organisation that supplied the vaccine to the COVID vaccination service provider.

Most sites will have received COVID vaccine via NHS organisations, so the contact for these is england.covidvaccs@nhs.net

A smaller number of sites and those in nations other than England should contact Movianto UK on 01234 587199, or email NHS.VaccineSupport@movianto.com

NEW: Patient Information Leaflet Shortage – Comirnaty Bivalent PIL

The programme's supply chain experienced a supply shortage of the Comirnaty Bivalent (Comirnaty Original/Omicron BA.1) Patient Information Leaflets (PILs) in the early part of this week, as a result of a picking error at the UKHSA warehouse. This shortage has meant that your delivery this week has been sent with a reduced number of PILs for this vaccine type.

We sincerely apologise for this shortage and any inconvenience it may cause your site. We have tried to reduce the impact, by reworking the allocation of PILs for each Comirnaty Bivalent order to ensure available stocks were distributed as equitably as possible. This action has resulted in all sites receiving at least 1 pack (60 PILs per pack) and where sites had placed larger orders, we scaled up quantities as much as possible. We do appreciate that despite this mitigation, sites will have a gap in supply and in some cases this may be considerable.

Please be assured we have worked with UKHSA to resolve this issue and will backfill your outstanding PIL order next week (week commencing 17 October), on your usual delivery day. Should you not require this replacement order please let your SVOC know as soon as possible.

Until these shortages can be rectified, your site will need to seek alternative arrangements to ensure you can provide vaccine recipients with a Comirnaty Bivalent PIL during their appointment.

Alternative arrangements could include:

- Utilising your existing supplies of Spikevax Bivalent and relevant PIL for all eligible vaccine recipients, this will not only ensure this vaccine is fully utilised prior to expiry but will reduce/remove the impact of the shortage of Comirnaty Bivalent PILs this week.
- Seek mutual aid from within your ICS, please seek support from your SVOC for this.

- Print PILs locally, a PDF of the PIL can be found [here](#), patients only require pages 1-5. (It's acknowledged that this is not always feasible in all vaccination locations.)
- Ask vaccine recipients if they would be happy to access the PIL electronically. We have provided a QR code PDF with this communication, which vaccine recipients can scan with their mobile device. Alternatively, there is a QR code on the vaccine carton.

If none of the above options are feasible, please contact your SVOC so they can request an urgent delivery from the national supply team.

Thank you for your understanding in this matter and please be assured we are working with UKHSA to ensure this type of shortage does not happen again.



QR for Comirnaty
Bivalent PIL .pdf

NEW: Possible Power Outages

Considering the recent warnings about possible power outages over the coming winter months, please ensure that you have business continuity plans have been reviewed and mitigation plans are in place for each of live site.

This includes thinking about:

- Has the BCP been reviewed recently, taking into account the possible implication of power outages?
- Has mitigation been put in place to cope with a 3-hour power outage for both in-hours and out-of-hours services?
- Do all vaccine fridges have data loggers?
- Do you require any support or additional equipment?

Please see the following guidance with best practice for managing the cold chain and for managing any cold chain incidents:

- [Storage, distribution and disposal of vaccines: the green book, chapter 3](#)
- [Vaccine incident guidance: responding to errors in vaccine storage, handling and administration](#)

UPDATE: Clinical Resources

1. Cohort Eligibility Tool

The [Cohort eligibility tool](#) has been updated following feedback from users. The resource includes the booster dose volume and clarifies the most suitable vaccine for

boosters in children age 12 in academic Year 7.

2. Revised Information for Healthcare Practitioners - including vaccination overseas

UKHSA have published a revised version of the [COVID-19 vaccination: Information for Healthcare Practitioners](#) guide. The Document History section of the guide highlights the key changes and clinical teams are advised to familiarise themselves with these. New guidance is included in the 'Inadvertent vaccine administration errors' section. There has also been a significant revision to incorporate guidance on 'Individuals who received COVID-19 vaccination overseas'. This supersedes the previous standalone document on this topic, which has now been withdrawn by UKHSA.

3. Which COVID-19 vaccine? poster

The [Which COVID-19 vaccine?](#) poster created by UKHSA has been updated to include the Spikevax® Bivalent Zero(0)/Omicron(O) and Comirnaty® Bivalent Original/Omicron BA.1 vaccines. This tool is useful to distinguish between the vaccines and can be used as a visual reminder of several vaccine characteristics including dose volume, patient group and number of doses per vial. UKHSA have complemented this with individual vaccine posters that can be found [here](#).

4. Infection Prevention Control

The latest Infection Prevention Control Guidance can be found [here](#). As we are seeing rising cases of COVID-19 we would encourage all systems to conduct local IPC risk assessments and to implement any adjustments you feel either appropriate or necessary.

5. Co-administration of COVID-19 and Influenza vaccines

Although not mandated by JCVI or DHSC, sites are strongly encouraged to co-promote and co-administer flu and COVID-19 vaccines where clinically and operationally feasible-administration of Nuvaxovid and flu is not recommended according to [The Green Book, chapter 14a](#). When administering Nuvaxovid (Novavax), there needs to be a separation of 7 days.

UPDATE: Vaccine types for Booster in 12-17year olds

Please see previous clinical update 8 September 2022 via [link](#) (item 6). In addition to this advice, you can now also refer patients to sites where Comirnaty® Bivalent Original/Omicron BA.1 is being administered. Contact your SVOC to determine local plans.

NEW: Maximising uptake of antenatal vaccinations during the autumn COVID-19 booster and flu vaccine programmes

Please see attached **C1698 - Maximising uptake of antenatal vaccinations during the autumn COVID-19 booster and flu vaccine programmes** letter.



C1698_Maximising
uptake of antenatal

UPDATE: Revised clinical safety dashboard now available

A revised version of the clinical safety dash board has been published and is available on Futures [here](#). Access is limited to individuals with recognised email addresses. Any Vaccination Site Managers who have not yet registered should send an email to their SVOC / RVOC requesting access. If anyone else needs access, please email england.covidvaccs@nhs.net explaining the need.

As before, the dashboard lists various exceptions from clinical guidance relating to the age, vaccine type and interval between doses. The metrics have been updated to reflect the requirements of the Autumn Booster campaign, plus the ongoing Evergreen offer. Until ongoing issues relating to recording of the Spikevax vaccines have been resolved, these metrics have been suppressed.

NEW: Workforce Surge toolkit

Following discussions today on system performance calls regarding surge plans, I have attached the surge toolkit which is available also on NHS Futures.

This provides guidance on planning for surge whilst optimising the lead employer model and making the use of unregistered workforce.

[Preparing for surge toolkit - COVID-19 Vaccination Programme - FutureNHS Collaboration Platform](#)

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact mandy.black2@nhs.net



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g for surge toolkit_v

UPDATE: Site Designation Process - Phase 5

We want to thank you for the enormous amount of work involved in responding to the Phase 5 Onboarding Process, expanding the number of sites available to deliver vaccines in the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme.

As part of this acceleration, together we have successfully onboarded over 475 extra sites across all delivery models, alongside continuing 2,249 existing Phase 3 sites, providing vital capacity – which is a huge achievement.

We are now in a position to scale back the onboarding process, including the twice weekly Phase 5 Onboarding, Management Control Group (Control Tower) Meetings. Therefore, from week commencing 10th October 2022, we will be running Control Tower Meetings on **Thursdays only** (deadline for submissions outlined below). We will be continuing with weekly drop-in Regional Sessions and continue to designate sites when required – based upon the SPL capacity within your region. Any regions who have submitted designation priority lists for outstanding requests, to be taken to Control Tower, will continued to be worked through on Thursdays.

As outlined in previous communications, in September regions were allocated a maximum cap of 7 SPL slots each (7 slots in total covering all 4 delivery models – CP, PCN, VC, HH/HH+); slots can be added to by releasing capacity within the region (closure of sites – this will be reflected on the SPL slot figure as a '+1' per site closed within 24 hours of the closure form being submitted via the Change Control portal) and slots removed from this allocation (reflected as a '-1' for each site designated at Control Tower). This figure is being monitored at a national level and we will be in contact if there are not enough SPL slots within your region to designate any new site request submissions or if we require your support to prioritise. Regional colleagues can continue to submit new site designation requests where required by exception via the relevant webforms on the CV19 Portal here: <https://cv19lvportal.necsu.nhs.uk/>.

Sites to be designated by exception continue to require a strong rationale taking into account a full assessment of the below factors which have been agreed within the National Operational Planning and Performance Group (OPPG). As per the current process, colleagues will need to confirm that this assessment has taken place via additional declarations on the webform. From 10 October, submissions received by **12:00hrs on Wednesdays** will be designated at Thursday's Control Tower Meeting. We will aim to provide feedback on site designation decisions 24 hours after the Control Tower Meeting; subject to no additional information being required.

Control Tower meetings are being reduced to reflect where we are in the deployment of the Autumn Booster programme, these meetings and associated opportunities for designation will be stood back up to the normal cadence (twice weekly) as required. We will continue to ensure you are made aware of any change in process.

As always, thank you for your continued support. Any questions, please contact england.vaccinecentresgroupsupport@nhs.net

NEW: New vaccine transfer application should be being used to manage all transfers from 13 October

Following the launch of the new vaccine transfer application two weeks ago, we have been reviewing the uptake and usage of it and can see that while the application is being successfully used by some systems this is not universal.

As a result of this analysis, we have taken the decision to not withdraw the old forms on the 13 October as originally planned but to extend the parallel running of the new and old processes for a further week until 20 October. **The old documents and forms will then be withdrawn and removed from the use on Thursday 20 October.**

During this extra week all transfers should be managed via the new application, with the old process only being used in the case of unresolvable issues with the application. If you do encounter an issue, please ensure you raise it with the Foundry [helpdesk](#) so it can be resolved for you.

To further support systems, the EECL team will be making 1-2-1 contact with those systems who appear to still be using the old process to offer additional help and understand any issues that may be being experienced.

If you are responsible for vaccine transfers in your system and haven't yet used the new application or have had any difficulties, we would encourage you to attend the [drop-in session with the EECL team on the 18 October \(2pm – 3pm\)](#). The team will be happy to answer any questions and provide advice on how to use the application. You can also access self-serve support in the 'Tutorials' section of the [application](#) itself. There is also an [FAQ](#) available on FutureNHS.

Please note: In order to be able to use the vaccine transfer application you will require Foundry access, please follow the steps outlined in the [Foundry onboarding guide](#) on NHS Futures. Users can also access support by contacting the Foundry helpdesk by emailing: vaccination.operationaldata@nhs.net.

We would also strongly recommend that all system colleagues involved in vaccine transfers, sign up to receive notifications on transfers; including offers of donations from sites, newly raised transfers, approvals of transfers, and completion of transfers; to ensure none of these activities are missed. To sign up to notifications go to the vaccine notification subscription manager in Foundry: [Notifications Manager](#). You will need to request access to the Notifications Purpose [here](#) to sign up to notifications channels.

NEW: Shared Learning and Webinars

1. Improvement Offer Evaluation

Many thanks to colleagues who contributed to our evaluation of the National VDP improvement offer from October 2021 to July 2022. Overall colleagues stated:

- Case studies, top tips and learning community webinars, have positively supported delivery and innovations.
- They would benefit from future webinar topics in the following areas,
 - Making every contact count
 - Reducing data latency & data capture/analysis
 - Supporting clients with disabilities
 - Preparation for surge
 - Transitioning to business as usual

There was less use of the QSIR (Quality service improvement and redesign) tools.

Next steps:

- We have reconvened the learning community webinars fortnightly from 5 October 2022. (Topic: What is QI & use of QSIR tools).
- We will continue to collate and cross pollinate innovations, case studies and top tips from systems and regions and share via Futures platform.
- We will continue to engage with stakeholders and tailor improvement support and topics to your needs.

2. New FuturesNHS Shared Learning Platform

We are pleased to announce that following your feedback, the national team have been working to consolidate all learning onto one [shared learning platform](#), this will serve as a one stop shop for case studies, insights, top tips, webinars, innovations, discussion forums.

Thank you to all system and regional colleagues who have helped in co designing this space and will continue to be our superusers on the platform. The new space was launched on the **10 October 2022**. We hope it will improve accessibility to learning and support.

3. Masterclass: Vaccination in pregnancy

All healthcare professionals have a responsibility to support, inform and encourage pregnant women to get vaccinated against COVID-19, flu, and pertussis.

On 20 October Professor Jacqueline Dunkley-Bent, Chief Midwife for England, is hosting a masterclass for midwives and fellow NHS professionals, to give objective advice on vaccination, based on the best available evidence. National experts will give talks on the risks of COVID, flu and pertussis around pregnancy; the science behind vaccination; common questions and concerns; and what professionals can do to safeguard women, parents, and babies. Please see the registration link : [Vaccination in pregnancy](#) for further details.

4. Webinars

Please hold the date for the next vaccination programme shared learning community webinar on 19th October the focus will be on Patient Safety. Please register via the following [link](#). Recordings of previous learning community webinar can be found [here](#). If you have a suggestion for a future webinar subject, please email c6.cag@nhs.net.