

ICARS Newsletter

Immunisation Clinical Advice & Response Service



Issue 111: 28th 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: New Government and NHS marketing resources available for seasonal flu and COVID campaign

On Sunday, the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) unveiled campaign material to bolster the current seasonal campaign. You can read the press release [here](#) and the resources are now available on UKHSA's [Campaign Resource Centre](#). These links and other new resources, including a stakeholder toolkit developed with DHSC and NHSE, are available on the [VDP workspace](#), [CommsLink](#) (for communications professionals) and will be added to this week's refresh of our core campaign toolkit.

We also celebrated the delivery of 10 million booster vaccinations with a new [video](#) and [press notice](#) featuring Steve Russell, encouraging others to come forward and another video on NHS England's [social platforms](#) with Nikki Kanani showing what happens at a co-administered flu and COVID vaccine appointment, while attending her own. Please do keep re-sharing such content on your own channels and keep promoting local and regional milestones in the same way.

NEW: Combined needle and syringes: Caina and Prosum

GBUK, who supply both the Caina and Prosum syringes, have advised the following regarding the design of their combined needle and syringes supplied for use with COVID 19 vaccines:

- The dead space in the Caina syringe is smaller than in the Prosum, and therefore leads to greater efficiency. Less liquid is lost in the dead space in the Caina syringe, than is lost in the Prosum syringe.
- Both the Caina syringes and the Prosum syringes have been tested and meet the ISO 7886-1:2017 standard for capacity tolerance.

It is important to note that only the recommended number of vaccine doses should be drawn up and administered from each vial. See [UKHSA Which COVID-19 vaccine poster](#) for further details on each product.

NEW: Eligibility for children aged 5 to 11 years old not in a clinical risk group

This is a reminder that the [Green Book](#), Chapter 14a, states children aged 5-11 years old who are not in a clinical risk group are eligible for a primary COVID-19 dose if they turned five years of age before the end of 31 August 2022.

If they turned five on or after 1 September 2022, they are not eligible unless they are in a clinical risk group or living with someone who is immunosuppressed.

It is possible that some children/their parents who are not eligible may have booked an COVID-19 vaccination appointment through NBS and therefore sites are reminded to verify eligibility in line with the Green Book.

REMINDER: Vaccination of healthcare workers for COVID-19

This is a reminder that all frontline healthcare workers should be offered the COVID-19 booster vaccination, allowing a minimum of three months from the previous dose. Please reference [Greenbook](#) for further details. Providers should aim to vaccinate healthcare workers before December 2022. Previous [JVCI guidance](#) issued suggested vaccination of healthcare workers closer to the winter to optimise benefits of protection over the winter. However, as we are now experiencing rising levels of infection, the advice is for healthcare workers to be vaccinated as soon as possible to allow for the period of two to three weeks before full benefit. Vaccination opportunities should then be offered to those healthcare workers who have not received the seasonal booster up to the end of January.

All frontline healthcare workers should also be offered the seasonal flu vaccination. Where possible COVID-19 and flu vaccines should be co-administered but neither vaccination should be delayed enabling this.

Further details of the resources available to providers to vaccinate their staff is available below:

[Healthcare worker COVID-19 and seasonal flu vaccination in Trusts letter](#)
[Trust Webinar HCW vaccinations](#)
[Healthcare worker communications and engagement resources](#)

UPDATE: Covid-19 Vaccination: Information for HCPs

The COVID-19 Vaccination: Information for Healthcare Practitioners document has been updated and available on via the [gov.uk website](#). The document includes detailed information on:

- the background of the programme
- the vaccines (as they become available)
- vaccine recommendations and eligibility
- contraindications and precautions
- vaccine administration issues

UPDATE: Surge planning toolkit

The surge toolkit has been updated to reflect the surge planning parameters that are in place to support with workforce planning and can be found on [FutureNHS](#).

[This document replaces all previous versions and updates include;](#)

- Information on civil service, volunteers and the GoodSAM app has been removed, as we are no longer in crisis mode
- Now includes the latest POD model design
- List of ICB's that have reservist models set up has been added as a link

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.

Cohort	Volume
Autumn/Winter Boosters	Circa 1.1m SMS & e-mails to arrive 25 - 27 October and letters 28 October
Autumn/Winter Boosters Reminder	74k SMS & e-mails to arrive 26 October and letters to arrive 29 October
Evergreen 16+ Learning Disabled	26k letters to arrive 28 October
Autumn/Winter Boosters 2 nd Reminder	Circa 0.8m SMS & e-mails to arrive 27-28 October and letters 31 October
Boosters 16+ and 5-15 At Risk & Severely Immunosuppressed	Circa 30k SMS & e-mails to arrive 28 October and letters 02 November
2 nd Dose Prompts 5-17 at risk Including Severely Immunosuppressed	Circa 1k e-mails to arrive 28 October

Look ahead (may be subject to amendment):

Cohort	Volume
Autumn Winter Boosters	Circa 0.7m SMS & e-mails to arrive 01-03 November and letters 05 November
Autumn Winter Booster reminders	Circa 1.9m SMS & e-mails to arrive 02-04 November and letters 07 November
Autumn Winter booster 2 nd reminder	Circa 1.37m SMS & e-mails to arrive 03-04 November and letters 07 November
Second Dose Prompts 18+ and 5-17 Not at Risk	Circa 14k SMS and e-mails to arrive 04 November and letters 09 November
5-15 At Risk & 16+ Boosters 1 st + 2 nd Reminders	<90k SMS & e-mails to arrive 04 November and letters 09 November

NEW: Making Every Contact Count (MECC) - Call for evidence

A call for evidence exercises for MECC is currently underway and communications with regards to this have been sent to Regional Directors of Commissioning who in turn will share the Call for Evidence exercise pack with their sites. The purpose of this exercise is to understand how MECC interventions are working in vaccination sites across the country since its roll out in April

- what's working well, the learning, opportunities, and considerations for the programme going forward. The call for evidence includes a pack of questionnaires for site leads, staff, and patients, a data collection template, as well as a guidance document outlining the details of how the exercise should be carried out at site-level. We'd like to emphasise the importance of returning the data collection template in addition to completing the questionnaires as this will be crucial to understanding MECC delivery."

Action: Please can we ask for your active participation in this exercise to ensure we have a good picture on MECC from across all seven regions. Systems and sites are asked to submit their returns by **Sunday 13 November 2022**.

If you have not received communication on the MECC Call for Evidence exercise by 21 October 2022, or if you have an enquiry about the Call to Evidence exercise, please get in touch by contacting us at england.pccovidvaccine@nhs.net Thank you for your continued support on the MECC programme.

NEW: Invitation to take part in further learning visits

Thank you to the regional COVID-19 vaccination teams and sites who have hosted a learning visit from colleagues from the National COVID-19 Vaccination Programme Team and shared their experiences, insights, innovation, and best practice of delivering the COVID-19 vaccination programme.

This learning has been collated into case studies and 'top tips' which have been published on the [NHS Futures Shared Learning Platform](#). There are new top tips on [managing multiple vaccines, supporting communities where uptake of the COVID-19 vaccine is low](#) and [continuously improving and learning](#).

Over the next few months, we are keen to talk to sites and teams who can share their experiences, insights and successes in the following areas:

- Making Every Contact Count
- Co-administration of other vaccines
- Using the National Protocol
- Using volunteers from St John Ambulance and the Royal Voluntary Service.

Visits can take place face-to-face onsite, or virtually via MS Teams. Together we will explore what you are currently doing and how, any perceived or experienced barriers and activity to tackle them, as well as your plans for the coming months. Please contact sarah.heneker1@nhs.net to express an interest.

REMINDER: New Bulk Cancellation Feature in Q-Flow

After listening to user feedback, we have now added new functionality for site managers to bulk cancel appointments in Q-Flow. However, this should be performed as a final step after a site has explored all other options to honour bookings. Please find the updated guidance [here](#).

NEW: Security Update and Reminders

To maintain site security, all vaccination sites or roving and mobile models are asked to:

- ensure site security leads review current site security plans and risk assessments
- confirm that all staff are aware of all security arrangements contained within the site security plan
- ensure current lockdown procedures are reviewed and communicated to staff
- confirm that liaison and good communication with the local Police force and Local Resilience Forum is maintained
- ensure procedures for the safe and secure storage of vaccines and other equipment is followed
- contact the local Police immediately using the 999 system if anti-vax protestors attend the site and cause disruption.

Further security advice and guidance can be found on the [FutureNHS site](#)

Please report any security incidents to NVOC via the [SBAR reporting system](#).

REMINDER: Workforce support to LVS

There is a [national workforce support offer](#) available to LVS to provide additional capacity, over and above local staffing, which includes additional trained (clinical and non-clinical) staff and volunteers ready to be deployed from NHS Volunteer Responders delivered through Royal Voluntary Service (RVS) and St John Ambulance (SJA)


All workforce queries should be directed to your [Lead Employer](#) in the first instance but please do contact the team directly if you have any challenges or feedback via PCNCP.workforceescalation@nhs.net

REMINDER: Changes to managing vaccine calendars in Q-Flow

Q-Flow was updated on 20 October to give site managers with responsibility to manage age-based calendar activation, in accordance with the sites approved assurances.

If sites want to allow 5-11, 12-15 or 16-17 year old children and young people to book appointments on the National Booking Service then a self-assessment readiness checklist **must** be completed and sites **must** work with regional teams to be assured and approved to vaccinate these age-based cohorts.

Once the correct assurance and approvals are in place site managers can edit the age attribute in the Content Management area of Q-Flow (see screenshot below) by clicking on the yellow edit box. It will then allow the calendar availability to publish onto the NBS.

Content Items			
Parameter Name	Description	Source	Value
 AccessibleToilets	Accessible toilets	  	False
 Allow12to15	Meet requirements to vaccinate eligible 12-15 year olds	  	False
 Allow16to17	Meet requirements to vaccinate eligible 16-17 year olds	  	False
 Allow5to11	Meet requirements to vaccinate eligible 5-11 year olds	  	False

Please note there is no action required for existing sites that are already vaccinating these cohorts. Site settings will remain set to True, but they will now be visible to site managers.

Regional teams can be given visibility of which sites are using this function correctly with a new [Site age attribute report](#).

Information and step by step guidance can be found in the Q-Flow [Operational Guidance](#) and [Setting Age-based Attributes](#) pages.

If you have questions or need support with the information provided, support is available Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 1:30 to 2:00. Please follow this [link](#) to join the meetings.

NEW: Help improve Point of Care system experience for staff

Do you work on the vaccination programme? Are you doing any of the following:

- Capturing and reporting on COVID-19 vaccination events through a Point of Care (PoC) system?
- Administering your organisation's PoC system?
- Involved in the decision making on which PoC to use in your organisation, or likely to be involved if you decide to switch, or are switching, which POC you use?

We would love to get your feedback and insights to help us improve Point of Care (POC) systems, the training and support provided, and the awareness and ability to switch the system used in your organisation.

Interested in taking part? [Take our POC Experience and Switching Survey](#) which should **only take 10-15 minutes** to complete.

If you have any questions regarding this research, please contact ross.philip1@nhs.net

NEW: Webinars and Training

1. Vaccination programme shared learning community webinar 2 November

The next learning community webinar will be held on Wednesday 2 November, 2pm-3pm 'Actionable Insights: Embedding the Learning from the COVID-19 vaccination programme'. Please register via the following [link](#).

Recordings of previous learning community webinars are available to view, along with all supporting resources on the [Shared Learning Platform](#) including:

- I'm interested in Quality Improvement (QI). How do I get started? [link](#)
- Enhancing Patient Safety – [link](#)

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

2. UPDATE: Training

The [COVID-19: vaccinator competency assessment tool](#) has recently been updated including:

- the content has been transferred to UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) format and all branding and references to PHE changed to UKHSA;
- the assessment tool has been expanded to allow recording of completed e-learning Core Knowledge module and assessment (or equivalent other training);
- and vaccine names updated in line with currently available supplies.

The [COVID-19: vaccinator training recommendations](#) has recently been updated with minor changes to wording and document links.