

ICARS Newsletter

Immunisation Clinical Advice & Response Service



Issue 126: 17th February 2023

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

To navigate this newsletter, please ctrl + click on the contents to take you to the contents

Contents:

- Supporting patient queries for planned travel – Covid 19 Vaccination Programme 2023 Update.
- NEW: Closure of the Vaccine Service Desk (VSD)
- UPDATE: End of Autumn Booster - Housebound Query Referrals
- NEW: Use of National Protocol and Patient Group Direction for Comirnaty® Original/Omicron BA.1 (15/15 micrograms)/dose COVID-19 mRNA vaccine after 12th February 2023
- NEW: Guidance on St John Ambulance - End of Contract and Retention of Volunteers to NHS England
- NEW: Non-Clinical IT (NCIT) Provided 4G Devices and SIM Termination and Return in March 2023
- NEW: Guidance on Wastage Reporting Following the Completion of the Autumn 2022 Booster Offer
- NEW: Data latency - Vaccination Data Resolution Service
- REMINDER: For information, Your Views on Q-Flow/NBS Vaccine Calendars Are Needed
- UPDATE: Notification of Vaccination Invites, Prompts and Reminders:
- Useful Links

Supporting patient queries for planned travel – Covid 19 Vaccination Programme 2023 Update.

We have received some queries for individuals looking to make travel plans and thought it would be useful to include some examples of scenarios which may help steer conversations with patients/parents or carers. The most up to date guidance on entry requirements for each country is found at the this web address: <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice>.

Entry criteria below are examples and correct at the time of publications of this update only.

Example 1

A parent of a child that turned 5 years old after 31.08.22 wanted to access a vaccine as part of the children's programme to travel to Spain. The child was not in an at-risk group or household contact of an at-risk individual.

Based on the current eligibility:

Any individual that turned 5 after the 31st August 2022 is no longer eligible for the children's offer as part of the 5-11 year old programme. Any newly diagnosed clinically extremely vulnerable child would be eligible. Please refer to table 4 of the Greenbrook ([available here](#))

Regarding the example of Spain, the below guidance is given regarding coronavirus [access 3/2/23]:

From 21 October 2022, all COVID-19 travel restrictions for travellers to Spain have been lifted. The rules that previously applied to travellers coming to Spain no longer apply:

- you are no longer required to show proof of being fully vaccinated
- you are no longer required to show proof of a negative COVID-19 test
- you are no longer required to show proof of having recovered from COVID-19 in the last 6 months.
- you are no longer required to complete a health control form prior to travel.

To support parents' concerns around risk of SARS-CoV2 infection rates and risk of exposure due to travel for unvaccinated 5–11-year-old travellers' parents/carers should be advised to review up to date information for their intended country of travel. The [TravelHealthPro website](#) can be accessed to check the latest information on risk from COVID-19 for Spain with further advice on [travel abroad and reducing spread of respiratory viruses during the COVID-19 pandemic](#).

The Covid 19 evergreen programme vaccination offer for a primary course of covid 19 vaccine is available to eligible individuals until the end of March 2023.

Example 2

The Autumn booster campaign will cease for ALL booster vaccinations from the 12th February 2023. An adult patient in the 16–49-year-old cohort (not in any at risk group, frontline health & social care staff or household contact of a clinically extremely vulnerable individual) has not received a booster dose before this date and is planning travel to the United States in May

2023 for work. Will the individual need a complete primary dose and evidence of an up-to-date booster recorded.

Most countries have now lifted proof of vaccination requirements. Although travellers should review the latest information for the United States [available here](#). Travellers should ensure they are up to date with the UK vaccination programme. From the 13th February 2023 the COVID 19 Programme follows JCVI advice and the recommendation is completion of a primary vaccination schedule (dose 1 and dose 2) and access to a vaccination offer will continue as part of the evergreen programme offer until the end of March 2023.

Please contact the ICARS service at england.swicars@nhs.net to support any clinical queries.

NEW: Closure of the Vaccine Service Desk (VSD)

Due to a significant drop in volume of queries, the COVID-19 vaccination programme has taken the decision to close the Vaccine Service Desk (VSD). From Monday 20th February, sites will no longer be able to contact the VSD phonenumber, with the existing mailbox (vaccineservicedesk@england.nhs.uk) remaining open until Friday 24th February. All queries submitted to the inbox by COP on February 24th will receive a response from the national team. Following this date, sites will contact IT suppliers directly for issue and query resolution.

In preparation for this change, we have worked with all the Point of Contact (PoC) IT suppliers to produce a list of contact details that sites can use to raise queries directly with the suppliers. Please see below the complete list of contact details.

Supplier Contact Details

MYS – Pharmacies	nhsbsa.pharmacysupport@nhs.net
MYS – PCN/GP	nhsbsa.gpsupport@nhs.net
Pinnacle	england.coviditescalations@nhs.net
NIVS	NIVS@england.nhs.uk
NIMS	scwcsu.vaccineprogramme@nhs.net
Foundry	Foundry.Support@england.nhs.uk
Medical Director	notifyus@medicaldirector.com
Sonar	helpdesk@sonarinformatics.com
Eva Health	support@evahealth.co.uk

These can also be found on the [Log a query with an IT System Helpdesk](#) page of the [COVID-19 vaccination programme workspace](#) along with information that sites will need to provide suppliers in order to resolve their query. If sites are unsuccessful in obtaining a resolution to their query directly with the supplier, they can escalate their issue via the agreed SVOC / RVOC / NVOC route.

In addition, should sites have queries relating to any of the following, these queries should continue to be escalated through the SVOC / RVOC / NVOC route:

- NBS / Qflow
- NHSE Non Clinical IT Supply Chain
- BT

- Call / Recall (SCW CSU)

As the volume of queries is currently very low, there is not expected to be a significant increase in escalations coming through this route.

Should you have any queries or concerns, please raise this to your RVOC who can escalate onwards to review and response.

UPDATE: End of Autumn Booster - Housebound Query Referrals

Following the announcement of the Autumn 22 booster campaign closure on 12th February that National Team have shared the following guidance regarding the Housebound Cohort -

- After 12th February, anyone requesting a housebound referral will be advised that the seasonal booster and primary booster campaigns have now ended in line with JCVI recommendation.
- No further referrals will be made for any boosters from 13th February onwards. The 119 call handler script will be updated to reflect the change
- For evergreen referrals (1st and 2nd doses), those requiring home vaccination should continue to be able to access them. Therefore, these referrals will continue.

NEW: Use of National Protocol and Patient Group Direction for Comirnaty® Original/Omicron BA.1 (15/15 micrograms)/dose COVID-19 mRNA vaccine after 12th February 2023

Both the National Protocol and Patient Group Direction for Comirnaty® Original/Omicron BA.1 (15/15 micrograms)/dose COVID-19 mRNA vaccine contain the following statement for the clinical condition or situation to which they apply:

Comirnaty® Original/Omicron BA.1 (15/15 micrograms)/dose COVID-19 mRNA vaccine is indicated for the active immunisation of individuals for the prevention of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus, in accordance with the national COVID-19 vaccination programme (see COVID-19 vaccination programme page) and recommendations given in Chapter 14a of the Immunisation Against Infectious Disease: the 'Green Book' (hereafter referred to as Chapter 14a), and subsequent correspondence/publications from the UKHSA and/or NHSE.

The National Protocol and Patient Group Direction can be used until the end of the Autumn 22 booster campaign. In most cases the last day of the campaign will be 12th February 2023 but where clinic, pop up or outreach activity has been scheduled, before the campaign end date was known, for after 12th February and you are unable to bring this activity forward to before the 12th February then the National Protocol and Patient Group Direction for Comirnaty® Original/Omicron BA.1 (15/15 micrograms)/dose COVID-19 mRNA vaccine can be used to administer the vaccine for this activity.

Any administration of a booster dose outside of the above would be at the clinical discretion of an independent prescriber and a Patient Specific Direction would be required for administration to take place.

NEW: Guidance on St John Ambulance - End of Contract and Retention of Volunteers to NHS England

Background: The contract between NHS England and St John Ambulance (SJA) for the provision of volunteers to the COVID-19 vaccination deployment programme will end on 31 March 2023. At this point, SJA will have provided more than a million hours of volunteer support to the programme in clinical support and advocacy roles across vaccination centre, pop up and outreach settings.

Retention of volunteers to NHS England: SJA has informed its vaccination volunteers that from 31 March, they may (1) continue with SJA in other roles, (2) apply to support NHS vaccination through the NHS Reserves programme, or (3) sign off. A survey is being sent to volunteers by SJA on 10 February requesting their expressions of interest and signposting the NHS Reserves website (which has a registration link). We have asked SJA to provide feedback on the number of respondents who express interest in continuing to support the NHS.

Future referrals: Referrals may continue to be submitted for SJA to fulfil shifts up to 31 March. After that date, local vaccination services and any other provider requiring additional staffing will be able to request this through approaches determined locally by their ICB. Further information will be issued in the coming weeks around the future arrangements for staffing sharing and extended workforce offers available locally.

Enquiries from SJA volunteers: If you are approached by SJA volunteers enquiring about how they may continue to support vaccination activities, please can you direct them to the NHS Reserve national website where they can find further information and access the expression of interest form -NHS Reserves.

NEW: Non-Clinical IT (NCIT) Provided 4G Devices and SIM Termination and Return in March 2023

FAO: COVID-19 vaccination sites currently utilising a programme funded Pepwave or MiFi 4G connection to access the internet (All NCIT supplied computers within such sites are connected via Wi-Fi with this router) – please share with your site's IT lead

Please note the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme will cease funding Pepwave and MiFi 4G connections by the end of March 2023.

- The SIMs will be terminated on 17 March 2023.
- Devices must be returned by sites to NCIT before 31 March 2023. At this time the Pepwave or MiFi devices will NOT function, however, rental charges will continue to be applied to the NHS until the device is returned. The cost to the NHS for non-returned devices is £600 for a Pepwave Router and £60 for a MiFi router.

A summary of the changes can be found below:

Device	Date of Change	End Site Change	Actions that the End Site need to take (suggested options)
Return of 4G Devices (Pepwave Routers / MiFi's)	As soon as possible	If your site has been notified that rented 4G device(s) have been deactivated (i.e. SIM terminated) and are no longer functional. Note: NHS are still paying a monthly rental charge on these devices until they are returned.	Return the 4G devices to NCIT^[1] as soon as possible to stop further rental charges being incurred and avoid a liability charge for lost devices.
4G Pepwave Routers & MiFi's	17/03/2023	All SIMs in rented 4G devices will be terminated on 17/03/2023. These devices will no longer provide internet connectivity over 4G at your site.	Routers and MiFi's are to be returned to NCIT^[1] team in packaging to be provided. Utilise local site Wi-Fi connectivity (especially at NHS HSCN sites) End site may procure a broadband internet connection from your preferred supplier. End site may procure 4G internet connectivity. Further communication will be provided.

[1] The details on returning equipment to NCIT are provided below.

ACTIONS FOR ALL SITES:

Please send an email to vaccinationIT@england.nhs.uk requesting a pre-paid postage label to return the Router and Aerial System by 31 March 2023

Alternatively, please post directly to:

NCIT
Express Sameday Ltd
Unit 9-10 Block C
Waleswood Road
Sheffield
South Yorkshire
S26 5PY

For any device that will not be returned, sites must submit a formal declaration that the device has been lost to vaccinationIT@england.nhs.uk.

ACTIONS FOR SITES CONTINUING TO VACCINATE AFTER 17 MARCH 2023:

If sites plan to continue vaccinating after 17 March 2023, they will need to take ONE of the following options:

1. If your site is on NHS premises, ask the current IT Supplier to extend Wi-Fi coverage to the vaccination area utilising the existing site HSCN connection and connect each of your computers to this Wi-Fi network.
2. Purchase/rent your own 4G router via your existing IT supplier and connect each of your computers to this Wi-Fi network.

3. Contract your own fixed line connectivity, or link to an existing site Wi-Fi connection and connect each of your computers to this Wi-Fi network.

There is NO option to extend or transfer the existing 4G router. We advise that you take immediate action to ensure provision is made for your facility to continue to have access to the internet after 17 March 2023.

If this is going to cause any operational issues, we suggest you urgently speak with your IT Support.

NEW: Guidance on Wastage Reporting Following the Completion of the Autumn 2022 Booster Offer

Following last week's update in the [Operational Bulletin \(8.2.23\)](#) on the management of stock following the ending of the Autumn 2022 booster campaign, please find below further guidance on how any booster vaccine wastage needs to be recorded on **Site Stock Manager**.

If a vial of vaccine is no longer usable and has been disposed of, a wastage record is required to report the disposal of stock. A vaccine may no longer be usable for many reasons including expiry and operational waste.

Where your site has completed all its booster vaccinations and has remaining vaccine which cannot be used by the site or by nearby sites before it is no longer viable, please record the following information on Site Stock Manager within Foundry to avoid an error code appearing:

- Vaccine type
- Batch number
- Actual expiry date as recorded on the carton of the vaccine

Should an error code appear, please go back through and check each of the above pieces of information have been inputted accurately.

A stocktake report must also be completed following the completion of a waste report to ensure accurate stockholding is shown.

A full guide on how to record wastage is available [here](#).

NEW: Data latency - Vaccination Data Resolution Service

The [COVID-19 vaccination enhanced service specifications for autumn/winter 2022](#) require that providers of COVID-19 vaccinations must adhere to defined standards of record keeping, ensuring that vaccination events are recorded on the Point of Care (PoC) system on the same day that the vaccination was administered. We previously advised sites to complete a Vaccination Data Resolution Service (VDRS) amendment form and send it to VDRS to record late vaccination events (post 7 days). It is vital that all providers record vaccination events in real-time. Late entries create both clinical and operational risks.

From 17 February 2023, this process is changing and VDRS will no longer accept electronic domestic and data latency submission forms from sites for COVID-19 vaccination additions, amendments, deletions or any form of correction. Any submissions received after 17 February 2023 will not be processed.

Revised process:

For late vaccination records delivered by your site only, please record on your PoC system. Amend records as required at site level only if your site delivered the vaccination. You can also refer the citizen to call 119 who may be able to help. For amendments, additions, and deletions that cannot be processed at site level direct the individuals to 119.

The requirement to record vaccination events on the same day as administration is not changing. NHSE also reserves the right not to remunerate sites for late records as per the service specifications.

REMINDER: For information, Your Views on Q-Flow/NBS Vaccine Calendars Are Needed

The National Booking Service team is gathering user feedback about the future of Covid-19 appointment calendars in Q-Flow. Site manager feedback would be greatly appreciated and will help to ensure that any futures developments provide you with the best user experience. A link to the survey is included [here](#). If you have any questions about the survey, you can contact nbsonboarding@nhs.net.

UPDATE: Notification of Vaccination Invites, Prompts and Reminders:

The below notifications are due to arrive between 14 February 2023 to 20 February 2023. 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.

Cohort	Volume (national)	Date	Regional detail
Evergreen 1 st Dose Reminder	55.6k	14/02/2023 to 18/02/2023	All regions
2 nd Dose reminders	13.4k	14/02/2023 to 18/02/2023	All regions
Evergreen 1 st Dose	C31.5k	20/02/2023	All regions

Look ahead (may be subject to amendment):

Cohort	Volume (national)	Date	Regional detail
2D Prompts 5-17 At risk include severely immunosuppressed	C168	22/02/2023 to 25/02/2023	All regions
2D Prompts 18+ and 5-17 Not at risk	C1.3k	22/02/2023 to 25/02/2023	All regions
Evergreens 1 st Dose	C31.5k	27/02/2023	All regions
2 nd Dose reminders	<C7.8k	23/02/2023 to 27/02/2023	All regions

Useful Links

Ops Notes:

You can find all the latest operational notes on FutureNHS: [Operational notes](#).

Communications Resources:

The national Campaign Resource Centre includes designed campaign resources for the current [public-facing winter campaign](#) as well as for encouraging uptake [among frontline staff](#).

You can find further scripts and communications resources on FutureNHS including toolkits on [seasonal flu and COVID vaccines](#), [for pharmacies on flu](#) plus a [poster](#), for [people with a weakened immune system](#) and [a communications pack for primary care](#) with template letters to adapt locally.

Clinical Updates:

See the latest [clinical updates](#).

Other Resources:

[Coronavirus vaccinations](#): Our Digital team 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.

[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.

[COVID-19 Vaccination Improvement Hub](#)

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 page on [case studies/FAQs](#) and recently guidance for [PCN groupings](#) and [community pharmacy](#)

All C19 vaccination queries for national teams should be escalated via the SVOC/RVOC/NVOC process.