

# ICARS Newsletter

Immunisation Clinical Advice & Response Service



*Issue 132: 12th May 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](mailto: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:**

- NEW: Vaccinations in Pregnancy
- UPDATE: Revised Information for Healthcare Practitioners
- UPDATE: Revised Green Book Chapter 14a
- UPDATE: Latest Patient Group Directions and National Protocols
- UPDATE: Vaccine Handling Guidance and Template Standard Operating Procedures for Spikevax BA.4-5
- NEW: VidPrevtyn Beta: Legal Mechanisms for Administration
- NEW: Confirmation of the Spikevax® Original/Bivalent BA. 4-5 Administration Needles and Syringes
- REMINDER: VidPrevtyn Beta: Frequently Asked Question on Fish / Shellfish Allergy
- NEW: PRN00418 - Comirnaty 3 Vaccination of 6-Month to 4-Year-Olds in a Clinical Risk Group Letter
- UPDATE: Revised Current Cohort Eligibility Tool
- NEW: Access to Vaccination for All Eligible Cohorts Including Primary Course
- NEW: ESR Records Which Have Failed the MPS/PDS Matching Process for Healthcare Worker Uptake Data for COVID-19 and Flu Vaccinations
- NEW: Help Us to Improve Point of Care Systems Used to Capture and Report on Various Vaccination Data
- NEW: Process for Sites Who Would Like to Switch Point of Care (PoC) Systems

- NEW: Change Request Process on Foundry Platform
- UPDATE: Safety Huddle Checklist
- UPDATE: Clinical Assurance Dashboard Metric Update
- NEW: FutureNHS Workspace for All Vaccination and Screening Providers
- NEW: Spring Campaign 2023 HEE e-lfh - COVID-19 Vaccines Training Updates Post 28 April 2023
- REMINDER: Patient and Health Care Publications for the COVID-19 Spring Booster 2023 Programme – Order Your Stock Now!
- Further National Links and Resources

## NEW: Vaccinations in Pregnancy

Teams are asked to continue to encourage pregnant women to come forward for the whooping cough (pertussis) and COVID-19 vaccinations.

### **COVID-19:**

Pregnant women who have not yet had at least two COVID-19 vaccinations are strongly encouraged to come forward at any point during pregnancy. It is harder to fight off infections when you're pregnant, which means they are at higher risk of becoming very ill with COVID-19.

If your patient is pregnant and has had one COVID-19 vaccination, or none at all, they can still get the vaccine until 30 June. After 30 June, the offer will become more targeted to those at higher risk from severe COVID-19, following advice from experts. The vaccine will usually only be offered seasonally (for example, during the autumn-winter period).

Pregnant women can book a COVID-19 vaccination appointment by downloading the NHS App, online at <http://www.nhs.uk/COVIDvaccination> or by calling 119. They can also speak to their midwife or GP team about the COVID-19 vaccine.

### **Whooping Cough (Pertussis):**

Pregnant women who have not yet had their whooping cough (pertussis) vaccine are strongly encouraged to come forward for the best protection for their baby. Whooping cough can be very serious for young babies, and infants who are too young to start their vaccinations are at greatest risk. They are often very unwell, and most will be admitted to hospital because of their illness.

Pregnant women can help protect their baby by getting vaccinated – ideally from 16 weeks up to 32 weeks pregnant. If for any reason they miss having the vaccine, they can still have it up until the end of pregnancy. Whooping cough vaccination appointments can be booked through the midwifery or GP team. For further information please see link [Whooping cough vaccination in pregnancy - NHS](#)

## UPDATE: Revised Information for Healthcare Practitioners

UKHSA has published a revised [COVID-19 Vaccination Programme Information for Healthcare Practitioners](#) guide. Clinical teams are advised to familiarise themselves with the new or updated content to support the vaccinating activities. Amendments are summarised in the Document History section of the guide.

## UPDATE: Revised Green Book Chapter 14a

The Green Book Chapter 14a was recently revised. Some of key changes are summarised below:

- Confirmation that the advice to suspend the routine 15 minute observation period applies to all currently available COVID-19 vaccines in all age groups
- Inclusion of the recent [JCVI advice](#) to vaccinate those children aged 6 months to 4 years in a clinical risk group (as included in Table 4) – further information regarding vaccination for this cohort will be shared by the programme
- The inclusion of VidPrevtyn Beta as an option for primary dose vaccination for those aged 65 years and over if there would otherwise be a delay in vaccination – as detailed in the separate Bulletin item entitled ‘VidPrevtyn Beta: legal mechanisms for administration’, this is not covered by the PGD or National Protocol therefore a prescriber model will be required for vaccination.

Clinical teams are advised to read and familiarise themselves with all the amendments.

## UPDATE: Latest Patient Group Directions and National Protocols

As described in previous bulletins, a new style of [PGDs and National Protocols](#) were developed for the Spring 2023 Campaign, whereby instead of having separate documents for each vaccine type, the latest documents group these together based on age cohorts: one for 5–17-year-olds and one for adults.

These latest PGDs and National Protocols that are currently in use in the programme supersede previously published documents which were vaccine specific. Those previous documents have been withdrawn and should no longer be used at site level.

## UPDATE: Vaccine Handling Guidance and Template Standard Operating Procedures for Spikevax BA.4-5

[Specialist Pharmacy Service guidance and template SOPs](#) are being updated this week in preparation for the deployment of Spikevax Original/Omicron BA.4-5. Clinical teams who will be using this vaccine are advised read, understand, and adopt these documents.

## NEW: VidPrevtyn Beta: Legal Mechanisms for Administration

The [National protocol for COVID-19 vaccine \(adults\)](#) and [Patient Group Direction: COVID-19 vaccine \(adults\)](#) can be used for booster vaccinations for individuals “due to turn 75 years of age on or before the end of the scheduled seasonal vaccination campaign”, as detailed in the

Criteria for Inclusion. This means that those individuals who will turn 75 by 30 June can be vaccinated for a booster dose using these legal mechanisms for administration at any point during the campaign.

These legal mechanisms for administration do not cover vaccination with VidPrevtyn Beta for primary doses. The revised [Green Book Chapter 14a](#) does support use of this vaccine for primary doses for those aged 65 years and above “if there would otherwise be a delay in vaccination” or where mRNA vaccines are not considered clinically suitable. In such circumstances, a Patient Specific Direction (PSD) is required to enable vaccination.

## **NEW: Confirmation of the Spikevax® Original/Bivalent BA. 4-5 Administration Needles and Syringes**

UKHSA have informed the programme that the combined needle and syringe (CNS) for the administration of Spikevax Original/Bivalent BA.4.5 be as follows:

The CNS used for the standard administration will be the GBUK Prosum 25G x 25mm, 1ml syringe. The CNS for administration for those individuals with morbid obesity will be the GBUK Prosum 23G x 38mm, 1ml syringe.

These are the same products that were used with the Spikevax Original and Spikevax Original/Bivalent BA.1 vaccines.

Both CNS come in packs of 100 and will be sent on a one for one basis alongside vaccine deliveries. As the minimum order quantity for Spikevax BA.4-5 is 50 doses there will be some oversupply on orders of less than 100 doses. This will be managed by the on-off logic built into the Ordering Platform. This logic automatically reduces or removes the CNS from future orders until the oversupply equals or nearly equals the quantity of vaccine doses a site has received.

## **REMINDER: VidPrevtyn Beta: Frequently Asked Question on Fish / Shellfish Allergy**

Fish / shellfish allergy is not a contraindication to receiving vaccination with VidPrevtyn Beta.

Although the AS03 adjuvant system contains squalene derived from shark oil, it is not necessary to ask individuals about fish / shellfish allergies ahead of vaccination. Should an individual enquire about suitability of the vaccine based on a fish / shellfish allergy they have, they can be reassured.

Allergic reactions are triggered in response to proteins in a foreign substance that is introduced into the body. Because squalene is naturally produced by human beings, it is not recognised as a foreign substance. It is also an oil, which does not contain any protein, hence is unable to trigger an allergic response. Most older recipients of the vaccine will have previously been given a dose of adjuvanted flu vaccine (Fluad) which also contains squalene.

## NEW: PRN00418 - Comirnaty 3 Vaccination of 6-Month to 4-Year-Olds in a Clinical Risk Group Letter

Please find attached PRN00418 - Comirnaty 3 vaccination of 6-month-4-year-olds in a clinical risk group letter. Please note the Enhanced Service Specification COVID-19 vaccination programme: 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023 has also been updated [Coronavirus Enhanced Service \(ES\) Specification COVID-19 vaccination programme: 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2023 \(england.nhs.uk\)](#)

This is also published here: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/covid-19-vaccination-of-6-month-to-4-year-olds-in-a-clinical-risk-group/>

## UPDATE: Revised Current Cohort Eligibility Tool

The [Current Cohort Eligibility Tool](#) has been refreshed to include Spikevax Original/Omicron BA.4-5, which will be supplied to designated sites to support the Spring Campaign.

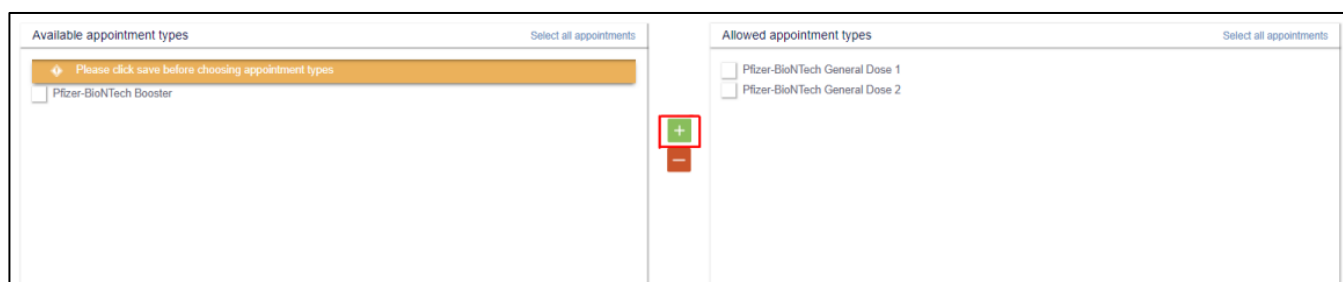
## NEW: Access to Vaccination for All Eligible Cohorts Including Primary Course

Site managers are reminded how to publish NBS availability for 'Evergreen' primary offer. The spring campaign will end on 30 June - people who have not yet come forward for their first and/or second dose of the COVID-19 vaccine are being encouraged to get their jabs before the offer ends on Friday 30 June – please ensure where possible that sites have sufficient capacity for primary course.

After you have created the availability dates in the diary manager of Q-Flow, and added time segments, you must choose the types of appointments available during those time segments.

Appointment types for COVID primary offer are Dose 1 and Dose 2 (*apart from Sanofi which is Booster only*).

- Use the Select button to choose the time segment you want to add appointments to.
- Use the check boxes to select the appointment type(s).
- Click the green plus + sign in the middle of the boxes to add the selected appointments to the Allowed appointment types box.
- Click Save.
- Repeat steps 1 to 4 for all time segments you created.



The screenshot displays two panels for managing appointment types. The left panel, titled 'Available appointment types', contains a message 'Please click save before choosing appointment types' and a checkbox for 'Pfizer-BioNTech Booster'. The right panel, titled 'Allowed appointment types', contains checkboxes for 'Pfizer-BioNTech General Dose 1' and 'Pfizer-BioNTech General Dose 2'. A red box highlights a green plus sign (+) in the center between the two panels, indicating the action to move a selected appointment type from the available list to the allowed list.

More information can be found on the Q-Flow guidance pages at [Choose appointment types](#).

## **NEW: ESR Records Which Have Failed the MPS/PDS Matching Process for Healthcare Worker Uptake Data for COVID-19 and Flu Vaccinations**

A number of Trusts have raised concerns in relation to their healthcare worker (HCW) uptake data for COVID-19 and flu vaccinations and feel this is due to vaccination events not being matched to the individuals on ESR. The average percentage of failed matching for the HCW on ESR population is 10%, but we also know this varies between trusts with some having a higher failure rate than others.

RVOC have conducted a detailed review of the matching process and data to understand how many records are failing the matching process, and where in the process this is happening. We are sharing this information (attached) to outline the scale of the issue and to help identify how it can be resolved.

The attached document provides an insight into each Trust's failure percentage and the most common reason for this failure. It shows which fields are causing the ESR record to fail in finding a match with the GP registration record.

As can be seen from the data potentially the most important things that would reduce matching failures are to align spellings of First Name and Surname, ensure Date of Birth (DOB) is both correct and the same, and that the same address and postcode are recorded, on the ESR and GP record whenever possible.

Ahead of the AW season it would be helpful for Trusts to ensure staff check and update their records in ESR to confirm accuracy of data as above, and also ensure their GP health record is accurate. Changes made to GP records may take some time to show but, it will result in a better match between the data held in ESR and their NHS healthcare record and therefore a better match between the vaccination event to the ESR record. This in turn will lead to a more complete identification of healthcare workers and therefore more accurate uptake reporting.

For any queries, please contact [england.vaccinecentresgroupsupport@nhs.net](mailto:england.vaccinecentresgroupsupport@nhs.net)

## **NEW: Help Us to Improve Point of Care Systems Used to Capture and Report on Various Vaccination Data**

Your help is requested to improve systems used to capture and report on various vaccination data (COVID, Flu and other vaccinations), by telling us what you think of some early prototypes for a new system, based on discovery work we did last year.

A series of 30 minute research sessions over Microsoft Teams will be held soon. If you'd like to take part, please complete the short form [here](#)

## **NEW: Process for Sites Who Would Like to Switch Point of Care (PoC) Systems**

Did you know that NHS provide a simple process that will allow your site to switch to a different PoC System?

**If you are a PCN or CP** - you have a choice of Point of Care providers to record Covid vaccinations. Sites may decide to switch to another provider for any reason such as another that better aligns with staff skills and experience, the native IT systems at that site or for an improved user experience.

**If you are a VC or HH using NIMS** – you may have missed some previous communications that asked sites still using the NIMS-App for vaccination event recording, to switch to NIVS to ensure they can continue to report data and receive payment.

**How to switch:**

1. Sites must raise a PoC switch request with their regional team / RVOC or SVOC; with site details, the new PoC they want to onboard with, and two current IT users
2. Regional team / RVOC or SVOC colleagues will then approve and submit a change webform to the National Programme
3. NHS Digital receive the approved request and will send your information to the new PoC System for account set up. You will then be contacted by the PoC with your new account details
4. NHS Digital will restrict access to your old PoC system account. Allowing you to view and edit records but disable the ability for you to add any new vaccination events
5. Please make your request in enough time to allow 7 working days for this process.

For more information or to find out your Point of Care options please visit [Looking to switch point of care](#).

## **NEW: Change Request Process on Foundry Platform**

Thank you for your ongoing support with COVID-19 vaccination programme and for your input in helping to shape the new processes for Site Designation and Change Control on Foundry. The initial phase of Foundry development has been completed and we are therefore pleased to confirm that we are ready to pilot the transition the following functions into the new Foundry process:

**Change Process – for all regions:**

The Foundry Platform will now be used to process changes requests for:

- Site Lead Contact Change (via site information tab on [Ordering Platform](#))
- Site reactivation (from paused state) and Lease Extension (VC) ([vaccination Site Change Request Application](#))
- NECSU platform should be used for all other change functions and requests [here](#).

Also, the following have now been retired from the NECSU platform:

- 11 Onboarding (LVS)
- Overseas (VC, HH)
- Nuvaxovid Complex Clinic (VC & HH)
- Expression of Interest (EOI) portal

**Site Designation:**

- The [PharmVac form](#) for site designation for LVS, VC & HH/HH+ will remain live for all regions until further notice.
- Designation of HH/HH+ sites will continue in the current [PharmaVac forms](#).

### **Training:**

- An additional refresher training session was held on Friday 28 April @14:00 -15:00 to support colleagues ahead of go live. Meeting invites were sent separately to all the regional leads and users.
- The training materials for new process and platform are now [here](#).

### **Contact details for Foundry Support:**

For any technical support for foundry access, purpose approvals, foundry issues and guidance please contact the foundry support team at [Foundry.Support@england.nhs.uk](mailto:Foundry.Support@england.nhs.uk)

## **UPDATE: Safety Huddle Checklist**

The updated safety huddle checklist has been updated to include Spikevax bivalent Original/Omicron BA.4-5. Please follow the link to the futures site to familiarise yourselves with the update and share with colleagues. Here is the link to futures for the Updated Safety Huddle Checklist: [Safety Huddle checklist - COVID-19 Vaccination Programme - FutureNHS Collaboration Platform](#).

## **UPDATE: Clinical Assurance Dashboard Metric Update**

This week's version of the [Clinical Assurance Dashboard](#) has had two updates applied to the metrics.

- The removal of the metric related to VidPrevtyn Beta as a primary dose. This is based on revised guidance in the [Green Book Chapter 14a](#)
- The inclusion of a metric related to Spikevax BA.4-5, which captures data on records of this vaccine since the start of the Spring campaign and up to 08 May 2023. During this period, no Spikevax BA.4-5 was available to sites, hence any records with this vaccine are likely to be recording errors which sites will need to correct.

## **NEW: FutureNHS Workspace for All Vaccination and Screening Providers**

On 2 May 2023, NHS England launched the new [Vaccination and Screening FutureNHS workspace](#). The workspace houses content created by NHS England to support vaccination and screening providers, including datasets, guidance, communications materials, and shared learning.

This workspace combines the content from the previous workspaces linked below, which will be closed:

- [NHS Public Health Commissioning & Operations](#)
- [Public Health Analysis](#)



- Note: the [Covid](#) and [Mpox](#) workspaces will remain open and separate

All vaccination and screening providers with an nhs.net or other recognised healthcare / government email address, can join the workspace by visiting the workspace and selecting "Join". More access guidance can be viewed [here](#).

More content will be uploaded in the coming weeks and you can sign up to receive a weekly summary of all uploads to the workspace [here](#).

We will be running structured feedback in the coming weeks to hear your experience of the workspace and ideas for improvement. In the meantime, if you have comments, questions, or feedback, please provide this [here](#).

## **NEW: Spring Campaign 2023 HEE e-lfh - COVID-19 Vaccines Training Updates Post 28 April 2023**

Please note the following recent e-learning updates that can be accessed via the e-lfh hub:

### ***Moderna COVID-19 vaccines Spikevax bivalent 25/25:***

Moderna COVID-19 vaccines Spikevax bivalent 25/25 COVID-19 Vaccine session and assessment were updated and made live on the e-lfh hub [here](#) on 28 April 2023. Updates include:

- Spring 2023 booster campaign and 'Evergreen' primary offer.
- Latest changes to the Green Book chapter 14a.
- Programme history largely summarised, except where required to provide context.
- Removal of Spikevax Original vaccine information except where required to provide context.
- Information on the two Spikevax Original/bivalent 25/25 vaccines now available and their use, emphasising their similarities and limited differences.
- Current weblinks and nomenclature.

### ***Update to Core Knowledge for COVID-19 Vaccinators:***

New vaccinators are required to undertake the Core e-learning session. This was updated on 25 April 2023. The assessment questions were last updated 11 April 2023.

Individuals who undertook the Core e-learning session between the most recent Green Book update (9 March 2023) and the Core training session update (25 April 2023) must have successfully completed the assessment that was published 11 April 2023, in order to be able to record completion of the Core e-learning. The link can be found [here](#).

Updates include:

- An explanation of the 'living with COVID-19' approach to vaccination.
- Spring 2023 booster programme and the criteria for the Spring 2023 'Evergreen' primary offer.
- Latest changes to the Green Book chapter 14a including recommended intervals, co-administration.

- Currently supplied vaccines, including bivalent mRNA vaccines and the introduction of Sanofi VidPrevtyn Beta for older adults, and of Pfizer BioNTech Comirnaty 3 (THREE) concentrate for 6 months to 4-year-old children at clinical risk.
- Current weblinks and nomenclature.

(Note: the core session assessment questions, last updated 11 April 2023, have again been reviewed; no further changes have been made).

### **Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine Comirnaty 10 Concentrate:**

The Pfizer-BioNTech Comirnaty 10 Concentrate (10 micrograms/dose) COVID-19 Vaccine session and assessment were updated and made live here on the elfh hub 11 April 2023.

Updates include:

- Spring 2023 campaign for 5- to 11-year-olds: boosters for immunosuppressed children and the criteria for the 'Evergreen' primary offer (household contacts of immunosuppressed no longer included).
- Latest changes to the Green Book chapter 14a including recommended intervals, co-administration.
- Explanation of 'Living with COVID-19' approach.
- Clinical risk group details removed – signposted to Green Book.
- Current weblinks and product information and nomenclature.

Further information detailing the latest updates can be found [here](#).

## **REMINDER: Patient and Health Care Publications for the COVID-19 Spring Booster 2023 Programme – Order Your Stock Now!**

Please ask all providers to register on the [Health Publications website](#) with their NHS or health family email address. All vaccine providers can order 500-1000 of each item on the website. Once they are registered and have an account, they can also call 0300 123 1002 to place orders on the phone. (Individuals are treated as members of the public and restricted to 5 copies of everything, however providers can order unlimited stock).

All providers should order stock of all the following to deliver the programme to give to every patient in line with the Patient Group Directive (PGD) and with guidance on both consent and aftercare.

- [What to expect leaflet - English version](#)
- What to expect after your vaccination leaflet translations available to order in: [Albanian](#), [Arabic](#), [Bengali](#), [Bulgarian](#), [Chinese](#) (simplified), [Chinese](#) (traditional, Cantonese), [Dari](#), [Estonian](#), [Gujarati](#), [Hindi](#), [Italian](#), [Latvian](#), [Lithuanian](#), [Panjabi](#), [Pashto](#), [Polish](#), [Russian](#), [Somali](#), [Spanish](#), [Tigrinya](#), [Turkish](#), [Ukrainian](#), [Urdu](#) and [Yoruba](#)
- Accessible formats of this leaflet are available to order or download in: [Audio](#), [Braille](#), [British Sign Language \(BSL\)](#) and [Large Print](#).
- [Spring booster leaflet - English version](#)
- Spring COVID-19 booster leaflet – translations available to order in [Albanian](#), [Arabic](#), [Bengali](#), [Bulgarian](#), [Chinese](#) (simplified), [Chinese](#) (traditional, Cantonese), [Dari](#),

[Estonian](#), [Gujarati](#), [Hindi](#), [Italian](#), [Latvian](#), [Lithuanian](#), [Panjabi](#), [Pashto](#), [Polish](#), [Russian](#), [Somali](#), [Spanish](#), [Tigrinya](#), [Turkish](#), [Ukrainian](#), [Urdu](#) and [Yoruba](#).

- Alternative and accessible formats of this leaflet are available to order or download as: [audio](#), [Braille](#), [British Sign Language \(BSL\)](#) and [large print](#).
- [Record card](#)
- [Sticker](#)
- For vaccinators – paper copies available: [“Which Vaccine?” poster Spring 2023](#), [Sanofi/GSK VidPrevtyn Beta mixing instructions poster](#), [individual vaccine product information posters](#) – download only
- Further information (download only): [Use of human and animal products in vaccines](#) and [Green Book chapter 14a](#)

## Further National Links and Resources

**Webinar: ‘Preparing for a successful Spring 2023 COVID-19 campaign’:** You can watch this recent webinar, which set out priorities and next steps for the forthcoming campaign, on FutureNHS [here](#).

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

**Communications resources:** You can find communications resources on FutureNHS including a [core script and FAQs](#) for the Spring campaign, [a long list of public FAQs](#), and a pack of [posters](#) to use in sites.

**Clinical updates:** Previous editions of the clinical updates, before they were merged with this Bulletin, can be found [here](#).

**Workforce and Training Bulletin:** Previous editions of this Bulletin, before it was merged with this Bulletin, can be found [here](#).

**Workforce support:** [National Workforce Support Offer Toolkit](#) is a practical guide for local vaccination service leads with more detail about the National Workforce Support Offer.

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

### 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.

Equalities Community of Practice [here](#), with bespoke tools, resources and content for engagement and practice in supporting and learning from people and partners within underserved communities and equalities groups.

[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 alongside the latest supply chain and customer service FAQs and other helpful information.

All COVID-19 vaccination queries for national teams should be escalated via the SVOC/RVOC/NVOC process.