ICARS Newsletter

Immunisation Clinical Advice & Response Service

NHS
England
South West

Issue 131: 28th April 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

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NEW: Immunosuppressed Cohort Definition and Stem Cell Information for Revaccination

Eligibility:

5 – 11 Year Olds	12 – 17 Year Olds	Adults
05-11 Immunosuppressed 05-11 Immunosuppressed (self-declared) 05-11 Severely Immunosuppressed	12-15 Immunosuppressed 12-15 Immunosuppressed (self-declared) 12-15 Severely Immunosuppressed	Immunosuppressed Immunosuppressed (self-declared) Severely Immunosuppressed

Immunosuppression:

Immunosuppression due to disease or treatment, including:

- Those undergoing chemotherapy or radiotherapy, solid organ transplant recipients, bone marrow or stem cell transplant recipients
- Multiple myeloma or genetic disorders affecting the immune system (e.g. deficiencies of IRAK-4 or NEMO, complement disorder, SCID)
- HIV infection at all stages
- Those with haematological malignancy, including leukaemia and lymphoma
- Those receiving immunosuppressive or immunomodulating biological therapy including, but not limited to, anti-TNF, alemtuzumab, ofatumumab, rituximab, patients receiving protein kinase inhibitors or PARP inhibitors, and individuals treated with steroid sparing agents such as cyclophosphamide and mycophenolate mofetil.
- Those treated with or likely to be treated with high or moderate dose corticosteroids (20mg or more per day for adults)
- Those receiving any dose of non-biological oral immune modulating drugs e.g. methotrexate, azathioprine, 6-mercaptopurine or mycophenolate
- Those with auto-immune diseases who may require long term immunosuppressive treatments for conditions including, but not limited to, systemic lupus erythematosus, rheumatoid arthritis, inflammatory bowel disease, scleroderma and psoriasis
- Children who are about to receive planned immunosuppressive therapy should be considered for vaccination prior to commencing therapy.

Stem-cell transplant patients and revaccination:

Patients who received COVID-19 vaccination before their stem cell transplant or CAR-T therapy should be re-vaccinated with a fresh primary course and booster. Typically, this will be a three-dose primary course followed by primary booster, as per JCVI advice and the Green book. They will also need to have their other immunisations repeated. The assumption should be that they are not immunised, that any protection gained from previous vaccination will be lost. Such patients should not be turned away from sites and should be re-immunised with further doses vaccinated. Confirming the date of stem cell transplant to ensure sufficient time has lapsed. It is recommended (in line with other immunisations) that re-immunisation should occur at 3-6 months after transplantation.

Occasionally, stem cell transplant patients will need a second stem cell transplant and consequently further revaccination following the pattern describe above may be necessary.

Recording Vaccination:

The POC systems are not set up specifically to account for this, therefore sites are asked to record these doses by using the immunocompromised field and free text explanation in the relevant box. The doses should be recorded as first dose, second dose, booster, booster assuming a 3-dose primary course will be required due to immunosuppression.

Legal mechanism for Revaccination:

Repeat primary courses for stem cell transplant patients (revaccination) are not covered by the National PGD or NP. Please see *the special considerations section* within each of the legal mechanisms. These appointments cannot be arranged through the national booking options, so patients should speak to their GP or specialist who should be able to signpost to local vaccination services and provide a patient specific direction (PSD).

Useful links and Resources:

Information for members of the public:

- NHSE web page [Getting a booster dose of the COVID-19 vaccine](#) (which has a breakdown of common immunosuppressed eligibility in the first drop-down menu)

Information for healthcare professionals:

- Full guide including FAQs that includes key messages and helps promote eligibility and booking options [20230418 Clinicians' toolkit for COVID-19 vaccinations spring 2023](#)
- Staff room poster with a short breakdown of what constitutes immunosuppressed eligibility: [Spring aide memoire for clinicians](#)
- [Greenbook COVID-19 chapter 14a (publishing.service.gov.uk)](#) – further information is available in table 3 and 4 specific lines relating to the immunosuppressed cohort
- Visual resources aimed at those with weakened immune systems on FutureNHS e.g., reduced wait time poster, immunosuppressive medications poster for display in pharmacy and relevant settings
- GP Dashboard in place and comms put out in the Primary Care bulletin
- Various comms resources onto our [Primary Care Futures page](#) for ease

NEW: Introduction of Spikevax BA. 4-5 to Spring Campaign

Ahead of the 2023 Spring Booster campaign JCVI advised ([JCVI statement on spring 2023 COVID-19 vaccinations, 22 February 2023 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk)) the use of newly available vaccines for people aged 18 years and older. Spikevax BA.4-5 is now available to regions and systems for deployment from 8 May.

Regions and systems are now asked to undertake the following actions:

Selection of sites to deliver Spikevax BA.4-5: Due to the timeframe of the Spring/Summer 2023 campaign and the shorter thawed shelf-life of Spikevax BA.4-5 (30 days) regional teams have been asked to select a number of high throughput sites to receive this vaccine, to ensure minimal wastage and provide good geographical coverage. Systems will contact selected sites to confirm with them directly.

Supply of Spikevax BA.4-5: To further minimise operational complexity, the deployment of Spikevax BA.4-5 supplies to sites has been aligned to coincide with the ending of the central supply of VidPrevtyn Beta and will only be for a set number of weeks. Eligible sites may begin to see allocations for Spikevax BA.4-5 in the supply plan for w/c 8 May, which were released to regions 13 April. The national team will carefully monitor demand and any changes will be reflected in each region's Spikevax BA.4-5 Max Caps.

PGD and National Protocols: The Patient Group Direction (PGD) and National Protocol documents for adults were published on 27 March, [Coronavirus » Legal mechanisms (england.nhs.uk)](https://www.england.nhs.uk) and already include Spikevax BA.4-5.

Start of Spikevax BA.4-5 use: As with other Spring /Summer 2023 vaccines, the national team will ensure that Spikevax BA.4-5 vaccine assurance is switched on for all Spring/Summer 2023 sites by the beginning of May. The first ordering cut-off will be Thursday 04 May for deliveries in w/c 08 May. Regional teams will carefully manage allocations to ensure only those sites selected to use this vaccine will be able to draw down and place orders. Comirnaty BA.4-5 and Comirnaty 10 will also be made available to those using Spikevax BA.4-5 to

ensure the needs of all cohorts can be met, as Spikevax BA.4-5 is only authorised for those aged 18+.

Sites should start to load relevant Moderna NBS calendars from the date of their first Spikevax BA 4-5 vaccine supply but not before 09 May 2023. Sites with Moderna calendars before this date should be deleted and booked appointments must be re-arranged into appropriate calendar types. Regional teams will work closely with sites not receiving Spikevax BA.4-5 to ensure that they do not erroneously upload NBS calendars for this vaccine type.

Delivery of different vaccines: Where sites have stocks of both bivalent vaccines in use, they must manage the supply to minimise clinical risk and both operational and expiry wastage. This should include following first expire, first out principles (FEFO), by utilising the vaccine with the shortest expiry first. Due to its shorter shelf-life, sites receiving Spikevax BA.4-5 should prioritise its use over VidPrevtyn Beta, returning to it (VidPrevtyn Beta) once Spikevax BA.4-5 stock is exhausted. However, if a vial of Comirnaty BA. 4-5 has been opened for a primary course or a seasonal booster it should be used in preference to Spikevax BA. 4-5 until the vial is complete.

Training: Training materials will be available from UKHSA w/c 2 May to allow training to be completed before administration of the vaccine.

Weekly stocktake returns: Sites should perform a weekly stocktake across all vaccine types and record this within Site Stock Manager on Foundry to ensure the central team have full visibility of frontline stock. This will enable the correct level of allocations to be set to meet future supply requirements.

Sites not receiving Spikevax BA.4-5: Once each region has utilised its supply of VidPrevtyn Beta, sites that are not using Spikevax BA.4-5 will switch to 100% Comirnaty BA.4-5 for booster vaccinations in those aged 12+. Supplies of Comirnaty 10 can continue to be ordered as required for those aged 5-11.

Should you have any concerns about allocations please contact your SVOC who will escalate as required.

REMINDER: Impact of May Bank Holidays on Vaccine Ordering

Following on from the cascade sent 9 March entitled: **Important: Key Supply and Delivery Information for Spring covid-19 Vaccine Campaign,** please be reminded that COVID-19 vaccine orders for Tuesday and Wednesday fixed delivery day sites will be impacted by the three upcoming May Bank Holidays.

If your site has a Tuesday or Wednesday delivery day, please ensure you place your vaccine order for delivery on **Tuesday 2nd, Wednesday 3rd, Tuesday 9th, Wednesday 10th, Tuesday 30th and Wednesday 31st May by** 8am on the previous Thursday, see table below. This is to ensure your orders can be processed and delivered on time.

Bank Holiday	Early May BH		Coronation BH		Late May BH	
Delivery Day/Date	Tue 2 May	Wed 3 May	Tue 9 May	Wed 10 May	Tues 30 May	Wed 31 May
Usual Order Cut- Off	Fri 28 April	Mon 1 May	Fri 5 May	Mon 8 May	Fri 26 May	Mon 29 May
Revised Order Cut- Off	Thu 27 April	Thu 27 April	Thu 4 May	Thu 4 May	Thu 25 May	Thu 25 May

- Please ensure your site has submitted a stocktake on Site Stock Manager within the previous 7 days before placing your order.

- If your site does not have a current stocktake, you will be prevented from ordering until a new record has been submitted and it can take up to 2 hours for this to be registered by the system and allow an order to proceed.

Many thanks for your support with these temporary bank holiday changes.

UPDATE: SNOMED Code 6 Months to 4 Years

Following some questions on how to search for SNOMED codes for patients aged 6 months to 4 years, please see the NHS SNOMED CT Browser search for 'vaccine 6 month' below:

As you can ascertain, there are SNOMED codes for 'children 6 months - 4 years'. **Delen** has also been checked and there is further information regarding Covid-19 and SNOMED CT here.

This also links to the COVID-19 Vaccination Codes document. The relevant codes are on page 8.

NEW: Housebound Vaccinations

It has come to our attention that some Hospital Hubs and Vaccination Centres using NIVS and Pinnacle Point of Care (PoC) systems do not have access to the template that allows sites to capture if a vaccination event took place in a housebound setting. Vaccinations can still be recorded on PoC systems in the usual way, but sites will need to manually report numbers of housebound vaccinations into their regional commissioning team for reconciliation purposes. Your regional team will advise on the local process in your area to capture and collate this information.

Please ensure you maintain an auditable record of vaccinations taking place in housebound settings where information cannot be captured in PoC systems.

An operational solution is being developed with PoC system providers in time for the Autumn/Winter 2023-24 Campaign.

NEW: Spring 2023 Vaccine Invites Weekly Summary

Cohort	Volume (national)	Date
Second Dose Reminders	8.8k	18 and 21 April
Second Dose Prompts 18+ and 5-17 Not at risk	15k	18 and 21 April
Spring Boosters [168 days, completed 3+ doses, NIS:76+ IS:61+]	c1.28m	21, 25 and 28 April

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

Cohort	Volume (national)	Date
Second Dose Prompts 5-17 At risk include SI/S	c1k	26 and 28 April
Second Dose Prompts 18+ and 5-17 Not at risk	c1.35k	26 and 28 April
Evergreens First Dose	c40k	27 April and 3 May
Spring Boosters [168 days, completed 3+ doses, NIS:76+ IS:61+]	C1.2m	28 April, 3 and 5 May

NEW: Using the GP COVID-19 Vaccine Dashboard to Locally Invite People for Spring Vaccinations

This is a reminder that PCNs may wish to use the GP COVID-19 vaccine dashboard to support them in identifying and inviting patients eligible for Spring vaccinations.

The dashboard identifies all patients that have been flagged as immunosuppressed through Cohorting as a Service (CaaS). The CaaS data draws on broader data sources than GP

Practice data, such as hospital data (HES), enabling PCNs and GP practices to identify additional patient with weakened immune systems.

The dashboards 'Uptake-Booster' and 'Patient Download' tabs are now configured to identify patients eligible for a seasonal vaccination this Spring:

People aged 75 and over (by 30 June 2023) and people aged 5 and over with a weakened immune system:

- who have completed a primary course;
- whose last dose was at least 91 days ago; and
- and have not had a seasonal vaccination since the Spring campaign started on 3 April 2023

The dashboard also enables the patient lists to be filtered to show only immunosuppressed patients or severely immunosuppressed patients (a sub-group of the immunosuppressed patients).

User guides for the GP dashboard can be found here.

Access to the GP dashboard requires an NHS smartcard. Any queries on NHS smartcard access should be directed to your local registration authority. For more information, go to Registration authorities and smartcards.

NEW: System Calendar – Moderna

It has been raised as an issue that some sites are putting appointment availability into the Moderna Q-Flow calendar in error. This can unfortunately result in citizens booking those appointments.

Sites should start to load relevant Moderna NBS calendars from the date of their first Spikevax BA 4-5 vaccine supply, though not before 9 May 2023. Sites with Moderna calendars before this date should be deleted and booked appointments must be re-arranged into appropriate calendar types.

NEW: Maintaining Up-to-date Site Details on the Walk-in Vaccination Site Finder

Sites are reminded to maintain up to date information of their walk-in vaccination offer via the walk-in COVID-19 vaccination site finder. Not maintaining up to date information risks unnecessary travel for citizens, increased calls, complaints to 119 and potential for a missed vaccination opportunity.

Sites should ensure that their walk-in offer sets out:
- which days of the week the site are operating walk-in clinics;
- what time of the day walk-in offers are available; and
- which age groups sites are offering vaccinations to

Information must be submitted for publication through the SharePoint site at least 24 hours in advance. More information can be found here.

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

Your help is required to improve systems used to capture and report on various vaccination data (COVID-19, flu and other vaccinations), by saying what you think of some early prototypes for a new system, based on work carried out last year.

A series of 30-minute research sessions are being conducted over Microsoft Teams. If you would like to take part, please complete the short form here.

REMINDER: Reactivating Your NBS and Point of Care Accounts

We are reminding users to check the status of their user accounts on NBS/Q-Flow and Point of Care (PoC). If users have been inactive on Q-Flow for over 50 days and/or PoC for over 90 days, the accounts will have been automatically deactivated in accordance with security measures.

Q-Flow reactivation:

If you need your account reactivated, please speak to an active site manager at your site to unlock your account for you. If there are no active site managers available, please raise this with your SVOC>RVOC>NVOC. Full Q-Flow guidance on unlocking is available here.

If you need any other NBS/Q-Flow help and support, the NHS Futures page has escalation processes, frequently asked questions and more information on the drop-in sessions held 13:30 – 14:00, Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays – please see here.

Point of Care reactivation:

If you need your account reactivated on your PoC please ask an active Site Admin to reactivate your account. If there are no active Site Admins then please contact your PoC Service Desk. Links to the different service desks can be found here.

REMINDER: NBS Check a Vaccination Service (Check-In app): Updated Streamlined Version is Now Available

As a direct response to user feedback, NBS has developed a streamlined check- in solution where appointments for the day are presented as a list – see screenshot below. This makes the checking in process much simpler and quicker. Other advantages of the service are that the data flows directly to Q-Flow, the service works securely offline and encourages best practice.

To try the updated Check-In app, we recommend reading the online guidance then visiting this page. The page may need to be refreshed to see the new view. Once logged in, the previous guided version is still available via a link at the bottom of the page.

If you are an arrival steward and are having issues logging in, it may be due to your account being deactivated after a period of inactivity. To resolve, ask your site manager to reactivate your account in Q-Flow.

Please let us know how we can improve the service further by completing our quick feedback survey here or by clicking 'Give Feedback' in the app.

REMINDER: New Ways to Contact the Vaccine Data Resolution Service (VDRS) and Overseas Service

If a patient thinks their or their child's COVID-19 vaccination record is missing or wrong, please advise them to call the Vaccine Data Resolution Service on **0300 561 0017.** The VDRS will ask them some questions to establish their identity and identify any errors in their vaccination record. 119 is no longer handling these queries but does have a recorded message directing people to the new number.

If a patient was vaccinated outside of England, they will no longer need a face-to- face appointment to update their vaccination record. Instead, they should email evidence to the NHS about any COVID-19 vaccinations they or their child had outside England so their vaccination record can be updated. Please advise them to follow the guidance here. This includes people who had their vaccinations in Scotland or Wales.

REMINDER: VidPrevtyn Beta – Product Batch Number Recording in Point of Care Systems

VidPrevtyn Beta is supplied as an outer pack (co-pack) containing one carton of 10 antigen vials and one carton of 10 adjuvant vials. Each component vial must be mixed before use.

When recording the batch number of VidPrevtyn Beta in use at the site within PoC systems, vaccination site staff should always **use the batch number provided on the outer pack (co-pack)**, i.e. the 7-digit alphanumeric number, to ensure accurate traceability of the entire product where necessary.

Whilst each component carton/vial will also have independent batch numbers printed, these do not fully support the identification of its original source and should therefore not be used in batch number records.

NEW: Communications Resources

Communications Resources to Support the Identification and Uptake of People Eligible This Spring, Including with a Weakened Immune System:

New resources have been added to the FutureNHS workspace to help frontline teams to identify and advise those who are eligible for COVID-19 vaccinations this spring, in given the importance of maintaining awareness (in particular among patients with a weakened immune system). These include a clinical toolkit with scripts, FAQs and template invitation material; an aide-mémoire to print out and share through staff rooms and noticeboards, and signposting card and sticker sheets with QR codes directing people to booking pages of nhs.uk.

There are many other posters in the same folder for use in public settings, including translations into common community languages. We welcome feedback on anything else that would be useful to support vaccination conversations with your patients or to promote uptake at points of care – please do let us know any suggestions.

UKHSA Poster – 'Which COVID-19 Vaccine?':

UKHSA recently updated their 'Which COVID-19 vaccine?' poster, highlighting the licensed vaccine doses for use in the spring campaign. For further information, please see the updated Spring 2023 Campaign Eligible Cohorts for COVID-19 Vaccines on FutureNHS.

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 after your vaccination:
- What to expect leaflet - English version
- 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

Spring COVID-19 booster leaflet:
- Spring booster leaflet - English version
- 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.

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
- Green Book chapter 14a

Other:
- Record card
- Sticker

REMINDER: Incident Reporting

The Incident reporting SOP has been updated and the regional incident reporting form has been revised with new categories added and ODS codes updated. There are drop downs for ease in most of the excel spreadsheet but the summary and response to the incident still remain free text.

Sites should ensure that these reports are filled out and submitted weekly as per the SOP here.

Process Map for Escalations to RVOC:

Please find attached a reminder process map for escalations to the regional team for any issues that arise, to ensure that all information is received by the region at the point of escalation, to support in streamlining resolution and reduce email traffic.

NEW: Clinical Assurance Dashboard (Previously Titled the Clinical Safety Dashboard)

The updated version of the Clinical Assurance Dashboard (previously titled the Clinical Safety Dashboard) is now available to view and download from the Futures website here.

The dashboard contains new metrics to identify records of vaccines that may have been given where not recommended for the Spring vaccination programme. A further metric will be added next week – 'number of vaccination events not recorded on same day'.

There are four metrics that have been highlighted are listed below with the rationale for inclusion in the dashboard:

- Any age given Comirnaty 30: this is not a recommended vaccine for the Spring campaign and the PGD/NP expired on 1 April 2023
- Any age given Comirnaty Bivalent (BA1): this is not a recommended vaccine for the Spring campaign
- Vidprevtyn given as a primary dose: this is licensed only for booster doses.
- <65 given Vidprevtyn; for the Spring programme this is recommended for those aged 75 years and over and those aged 65 years and over if in an Older Adult Care Home.

Sites should review their records, and where necessary correct any recording errors and manage any incidents identified as per the updated SOP.

REMINDER: World Immunisation Week

Latest data shows that one in ten children in England are not up to date with their routine vaccinations, putting them at risk of becoming unwell from a range of potentially serious illnesses. So, this World Immunisation Week (24-30th April), we are encouraging parents to make sure their children are up to date. Please do continue to make the most of conversations with individuals about wider vaccination needs of them and their family, reminding parents to check their child's red book to ensure they are up to date and know to speak to their GP practice if they need to catch up. For more information on which vaccines to have when, visit the NHS website. Resources to help promote the week on your channels can be found on the COVID-19 vaccination programme workspace here.

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 and case studies. 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.