

South West Vaccination & Screening Team

ICARS Bulletin


South West Collaborative
Commissioning Hub



Issue 139b: 21st August 2023

PLEASE SHARE THIS NEWSLETTERS WITH ALL RELEVANT STAFF INVOLVED WITH THE VACCINATION PROGRAMME

PLEASE NOTE: This issue replaces issue 139 which was circulated on Friday 18th August. Please delete issue 139 if you have not already done so.

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:

- REMINDER: Sign up Process for Primary Care Providers
- NEW: COVID-19 Planning Principles – Autumn / Winter 23-24 Campaign
- NEW: Care Home Eligibility Guidance
- NEW: Covid/Flu Start Date
- NEW: Open Consultation - Supporting the Delivery of COVID-19 and Influenza Vaccination
- NEW: Communications Resources Now Available to Order to Support Winter Flu and COVID-19 Vaccinations for Healthcare Workers
- NEW: Detained Estates (DE) LVS Foundry Training Event – Thursday 24 August
- REMINDER: Changes to Q-flow/NBS for Autumn Winter 2023
- REMINDER: Decommissioning and Pausing of Inactive COVID-19 Vaccines From the Vaccine Deployment Programme
- Further National Links and Resources

REMINDER: Sign up Process for Primary Care Providers

This is a reminder that the 23-24 COVID-19 and flu vaccination campaigns sign-up processes are now open.

The deadline for Pharmacy Contractors to have registered and completed their COVID-19 vaccination expression of interest submission is **5pm on 29 August 2023**.

GPs are invited to sign up to participate in the Autumn / Winter COVID-19 vaccination campaign by notifying their local commissioner by **5pm on 29 August 2023**.

Documents published for General Practices:

- GP [COVID-19](#) Enhanced Service Specification;
- GP [Seasonal Influenza Vaccination](#) and [Childhood Influenza](#) Vaccination Enhanced Service Specifications;
- Seasonal Influenza vaccination programme [additional guidance](#)
- [COVID-19](#) and [Seasonal Influenza](#) collaboration agreements

Documents published for pharmacy contractors:

- Community Pharmacy Draft [COVID-19](#) Enhanced Service Specification
- Community Pharmacy [Seasonal Influenza](#) Vaccination Advanced Service Specification;
- the 'Community Pharmacy [expression of interest process](#), 'Expression of Interest Questions' and 'How to submit an expression of interest' documents.

NEW: COVID-19 Planning Principles – Autumn / Winter 23-24 Campaign

The Planning Principles were shared this week for regions to use to assure themselves that ICBs are prepared for Autumn 2023 Campaign. They reflect the priorities outlined in the system letter ([here](#)), published 10 August 2023.

Cohort Eligibility – COVID-19:

Last week, the Government accepted final Joint Committee for Vaccination and Immunisation ([JCVI](#)) [advice](#) for a COVID-19 Autumn 2023 seasonal campaign. The groups to be offered a COVID-19 booster vaccine are:

- Residents in a care home for older adults.
- All adults aged 65 years and over.
- Persons aged 6 months to 64 years in a clinical risk group, as laid out in the Immunisation Green Book, COVID-19 Chapter (Green Book).
- Frontline health and social care workers.
- Persons aged 12 to 64 years who are household contacts (as defined in the Green Book) of people with immunosuppression.
- Persons aged 16 to 64 years who are carers (as defined in the Green Book) and staff working in care homes for older adults.
- The JCVI also advises primary course vaccination for individuals in the above cohorts who have not had any previous doses should be offered. They should receive a single dose of COVID-19 vaccine during the campaign period.

Cohort Eligibility – Flu:

Eligible cohorts for the flu programme remain unchanged from those set out in the [National flu immunisation programme 2023 to 2024 letter](#).

The below groups will be eligible for a flu vaccine from 1 September 2023:

- Those aged 65 years and over.
- Those aged 6 months to under 65 years in clinical risk groups (as defined by the [Green Book, chapter 19 \(Influenza\)](#)).
- Pregnant women.
- All children aged 2 or 3 years on 31 August 2023.
- Primary school aged children (from Reception to Year 6).
- Those in long-stay residential care homes.
- Carers in receipt of carer's allowance, or those who are the main carer of an elderly or disabled person.
- Close contacts of immunocompromised individuals.
- Frontline workers in a social care setting without an employer led occupational health scheme. This includes those working for a registered residential care or nursing home, registered domiciliary care providers, voluntary managed hospice providers and those that are employed by those who receive direct payments (personal budgets) or Personal Health budgets, such as Personal Assistants.

The age cohorts for flu and COVID-19 vaccinations have been aligned and facilitate co-administration.

All those who turn 65 years by 31 March 2024 are eligible for both vaccinations.

NEW: Care Home Eligibility Guidance

All care homes should be visited during the autumn winter campaign, including non-older adult care homes. Consideration will need to be given to non-older adult care homes – this may be individual residents, household contacts/setting wide offer.

A permissive approach to vaccination in line with advice in the Green Book COVID-19 Chapter 14a is encouraged throughout all care home settings as there is a clear benefit in reducing the risk of transmission within these populations, given the high risk of exposure. All residents in care homes for older adults are eligible, as per JCVI guidance.

All residents living in non-older adult care homes should also be considered for vaccination. It is anticipated that they will fall into one or more of the following eligible groups.

- Persons aged 65 years and over (by 31 March 2024).
- Persons aged 6 months to 64 years in a clinical risk group – see Green Book COVID-19 Chapter 14a (Tables 3 and 4) for a full list of eligible clinical conditions and medical treatments.
- Persons aged 12 to 64 years who are household contacts (as defined in the Green Book) of people with immunosuppression.

Please note, the Green Book recommends vaccination of the whole resident population, including younger adults in long-stay nursing and residential care settings where a high proportion of the population is considered eligible.

Further supporting material will follow on this subject.

NEW: Covid/Flu Start Date

The start of the Autumn-Winter (AW) 2023-24 Flu & Covid 19 vaccination programmes has been confirmed by NHSE in the Seasonal campaign letter of 10/08/23. This can be accessed here - <https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/autumn-winter-23-24-flu-and-covid-19-seasonal-campaign/> (and attached if needed).

NEW: Open Consultation - Supporting the Delivery of COVID-19 and Influenza Vaccination

The Human Medicines Regulations ([The Human Medicines \(Coronavirus and Influenza\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2020](#)) were amended to provide greater flexibilities for the movement and supply of certain type of vaccines, in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Department of Health and Social Care is now looking to ensure that the flexibilities established by those regulations are maintained for a further time-limited period to support the continuing supply, distribution and administration of COVID-19 and influenza vaccines as we transition out of the pandemic. Specifically, in the following provisions:

- Regulation 3A
- Regulation 19
- Regulation 247A

An open consultation, **“supporting the delivery of COVID-19 and influenza vaccination”** was launched by the Department of Health & Social Care on the 7th of August and we want to encourage participation from our SW teams in responding to the proposals. Access to the open consultation is available here: [Supporting the delivery of COVID-19 and influenza vaccination - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#).

The aim of the proposal set out in the consultation is to enable the continued deployment of safe and effective COVID-19 and influenza vaccines to the pace and scale required, both now and in the future, whilst maintaining public safety.

Please do get in touch if we can support with any further information.

NEW: Communications Resources Now Available to Order to Support Winter Flu and COVID-19 Vaccinations for Healthcare Workers

Printed materials to promote winter vaccinations for eligible frontline healthcare workers are now available to pre-order until 11:59pm Friday 8 September and will be delivered to sites late September. Alternative versions are available with social care branding for use as appropriate.

To order printed materials please click [here](#). Digital versions of these campaign assets will be available for download mid-September at the same link.

NEW: Detained Estates (DE) LVS Foundry Training Event – Thursday 24 August

An important webinar & training session will be held on Thursday 24th August at 13:00 - 14:00 for Detained Estates (DE) LVS sites, DE LVS Covid-19 vaccination Commissioners, Regional Covid-19 vaccination Leads, Regional Allocation Leads of NHS Foundry applications in preparation for COVID-19 vaccination autumn/winter campaign.

- You can register for this event [here](#)
- Please create a calendar invite for this meeting in your calendar.
- **IMPORTANT NOTE:** After registering for the event if your confirmation email does not appear in your inbox, please check your junk folder. You will need this email to join the event.
- All supporting training materials and a recording of the session will be uploaded after the event to FutureNHS [here](#)

For any questions or assistance with access or the above please contact vaccination.operationaldata@england.nhs.uk.

For any questions or assistance with the DE LVS Transition plans & progress please contact england.covid-healthjustice@nhs.net.

REMINDER: Changes to Q-flow/NBS for Autumn Winter 2023

We are undertaking essential maintenance and user experience upgrades in Q-Flow in preparation for the next vaccination campaign. This includes:

- changes to the vaccine calendars for adding and managing appointment availability.
- an improved and more secure way for users to be added to multiple vaccination sites.
- a new ICB > Region structure to increase site visibility and enhance user support.

To complete these changes and improve data security, **all users have been removed from Q-Flow**. Before the upcoming campaign the site Lead User, listed within Foundry, will be added to each site and they can then begin to add Site Managers, Arrival Stewards, and other vaccination colleagues.

Action: Please can sites ensure that the Lead Users and Site Leads in Foundry are correct and up to date by 25 August.

If you are still unable to access your site on Q-Flow by 10 September 2023 please contact your SVOC or RVOC.

There will be Site Manager Training Webinars running in September and October – details and links to register are [here](#).

REMINDER: Decommissioning and Pausing of Inactive COVID-19 Vaccines From the Vaccine Deployment Programme

To simplify our COVID-19 vaccine portfolio, significantly reduce operational complexity, and reduce wastage levels, three inactive COVID-19 vaccines will be decommissioned from 17 August 2023:

- Spikevax Original
- Comirnaty 30 Concentrate
- Spikevax Bivalent Original/Omicron.

Use of these vaccines has already ceased within the programme, as they have been replaced by newer variants on the recommendation of the JCVI and all stocks have now expired.

In addition, two further vaccine types will be officially paused from 17 August:

- Comirnaty Bivalent Original/Omicron
- Nuvaxovid

Use of both these vaccine types has also temporarily ceased within the programme and all site level inventory has now expired.

Further details on actions sites need to take to prepare for the decommissioning and pausing of vaccines can be found [here](#).

Further National Links and Resources

Operational notes:

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

Communications resources:

You can find communications resources on FutureNHS on the inter-seasonal period including [a long list of public FAQs](#).

Workforce support:

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.