

South West Vaccination & Screening Team

Section 7a Bulletin


South West Collaborative
Commissioning Hub



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ICARS Newsletter

Please find attached this week's ICARS newsletter.

Reminder – 2023/24 Seasonal Flu Programme – Adult reimbursable vaccines

We have been made aware of one or two providers that have ordered a significant stock of QIVe flu vaccine and we would not expect to see this given the guidance. Please be aware that reimbursement of flu vaccines for eligible adults in the 2023/24 Seasonal Flu programme will only be permitted for the following vaccines:

Patients aged 65 years and over

Adjuvanted quadrivalent influenza vaccine (aQIV) / recombinant quadrivalent influenza vaccine (QIVr). Cell-based quadrivalent influenza vaccine (QIVc) – may only be administered when every attempt to use aQIV or QIVr has been exhausted – evidence of this may be required before reimbursement is agreed.

Patients aged between 18 and 64 years in eligible groups as per the 2023/24 annual flu letter [National flu immunisation programme 2023 to 2024 letter - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/118422/national-flu-immunisation-programme-2023-to-2024-letter.pdf)

Cell-based quadrivalent influenza vaccine (QIVc) / recombinant quadrivalent influenza vaccine (QIVr) should be prioritised for these cohorts as there is a potential advantage to using flu vaccines which do not use eggs in the manufacturing process (cell-culture or recombinant) compared with egg-cultured flu vaccines, due to the possible impact of “egg-adaptation” on the effectiveness of flu vaccines, particularly against A(H3N2) strains. Egg-grown quadrivalent influenza vaccine (QIVe) – may only be administered when every attempt to use QIVc or QIVr has been exhausted – evidence of this may be required before reimbursement is agreed.

Action: if you have ordered QIVe flu vaccine we recommend you amend your order in accordance the above guidance as a matter of urgency.

Opportunistic Hep B catch up vaccination

The incomplete immunisation algorithm has recently been updated to state “Children born from 1 August 2017 who received primary vaccines without Hep B should be opportunistically offered a 3 dose course of monovalent Hep B vaccine. If they are in a high-risk group or are exposed to hepatitis B, they should be proactively offered a hepatitis B vaccine course.”

We can confirm that this is to be an opportunistic offer, and children will not be scheduled for these vaccinations by CHIS. There have been some instances where children have been scheduled for these immunisation in error. This has now been resolved in the South West region except in Dorset, where the CHIS team are urgently working to stop Hep B being added to the schedule for this group of children. If you have any patients who present after having received a letter from CHIS then you may make a clinical decision as to whether to offer the immunisations based on the child’s immunisation history.

Decommissioning and pausing of inactive Covid-19 vaccines from the Vaccine Deployment Programme

In order to simplify our COVID-19 vaccine portfolio, significantly reduce operational complexity, and reduce wastage levels, a decision has been made to decommission three inactive Covid-19 vaccines from 17 August 2023.

The three vaccines, which are being decommissioned are:

- Spikevax Original (last delivered to sites January 2023)
- Comirnaty 30 Concentrate (last delivered to sites March 2023)
- Spikevax BA.1 (last delivered to sites March 2023)

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 BA.1 (last delivered to sites March 2023)
- Nuvaxovid (last delivered to sites May 2023)

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

Both vaccines will be kept in a paused status until further notice, allowing the programme to reactivate them if required.

Sites are reminded to consider the implications of the pausing of Nuvaxovid on their service provision, including changes to referral processes, with support from systems. Options are being considered regarding non-mRNA vaccines for Autumn/Winter and information will follow in due course.

Foundry System:

Work is currently underway to remove the three vaccine types being decommissioned from the Foundry system including Site Stock Manager and the Transfer App and this is expected to be completed by 31 August. The two paused vaccines will remain on the system but will be hidden from view.

Point of Care Systems:

Spikevax Original has been removed from the Point of Care systems and will no longer be an option when recording a vaccination event. Comirnaty 30 Concentrate and Spikevax BA.1 will be removed before the Autumn campaign begins. Comirnaty BA.1 and Nuvaxovid will remain on the systems, while these vaccine types are in a paused state, but they are not to be used for recording vaccination events unless they are returned to use.

Training Materials:

Training and guidance materials relating to the three decommissioned vaccine types will be removed from the e-learning for health site. Training and guidance materials relating to the two paused vaccine types will remain available in case there is a requirement to reactivate.

Actions sites need to take to prepare for the decommissioning and pausing of vaccines:

- **Vaccine Supply:** All sites should check they are not holding stocks of any of the five vaccine types due to be paused or decommissioned. If stock is held, please ensure this is disposed of **immediately** in line with your site's expired vaccine procedure, as this stock will have expired. Please ensure wastage and stock take records are updated accordingly in Foundry Site Stock Manager.
- **Vaccine Stocktake:** All sites are requested to update their stocktake records, so they reflect a zero balance for all five vaccine types prior to the 17 August. It will no longer be possible to enter stocktakes for these 5 vaccine types after the 31 August.
- **Patient Information Leaflets:** All sites should review their stocks of Patient Information Leaflets (PILs) and dispose of any PILs relating to these five vaccine types, using your standard processes.
- **Combined Needles and Syringes:** Sites that are still holding stocks of any combined needles and syringe (CNS) products that were specifically issued with the three vaccine types being decommissioned and that are not current in use with active vaccine types (see Appendix 1), should take one of the following actions if they cannot be used within your site:
 - Offer them to other NHS or local settings providing NHS commissioned services within your ICB or region
 - or**
 - Remove them from stock in line with local sharps exiting procedures

Appendix 1: Table of current CNS in use within the Vaccine Deployment Programme, which must be retained:

Vaccine	Admin CNS	Admin MO CNS	Dilution
Comirnaty 10 Concentrate	GBUK Prosum 23g x 25mm, 1ml	GBUK Prosum 21g x 38mm Needle only	BD Discardit 23g x 25mm, 2ml

Comirnaty Bivalent BA.4-5	GBUK/Caina 25g x 25mm, 1ml safety CNS	Reliance 25g x 38mm, 1ml safety CNS	N/A
Comirnaty Bivalent BA.1 (paused)	GBUK/Caina 25g x 25mm, 1ml safety CNS	GBUK Prosum 21g x 38mm Needle only	N/A
Comirnaty 3 infant	GBUK/Caina 25g x 25mm, 1ml safety CNS	N/A	Griffiths and Neilsen 21g x 38mm safety CNS
Spikevax Bivalent Original BA.4-5	GBUK Prosum 25G x 25mm 1ml CNS	GBUK Prosum 23g x 38mm, 1ml CNS	N/A
Nuvaxovid (paused)	GBUK Prosum 25G x 25mm 1ml CNS	GBUK Prosum 23G x 38mm syringe	N/A
VidPrevtyn Beta	BD Flu+ 23g x 25mm, 1ml CNS	GBUK Prosum 23g x 38mm, 1ml CNS	GBUK Prosafe 21g x 38mm, 3ml safety CNS

Further Information

If you have any questions or wish to provide feedback, please contact the SW Vaccination and Screening Team at england.swvast@nhs.net. Back issues of these bulletins and attachments are available on the NHS England website [here](#). **Please note that if there are no items for your information a GP Bulletin will not be circulated.**