

COVID-19 vaccine stock management; expiry date extensions and good practice tips.

Throughout the programme periodic updates to the ultra-low temperature (ULT) frozen vaccine shelf-life of COVID-19 vaccines have been approved by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA). Within the Vaccine Programme supply chain these updates are applied by our Specialist Pharmaceutical logistics (SPLs) partners prior to distribution with no direct action required by sites.

Recently updated expiry extension information to support the start of the Autumn/Winter 2023/24 campaign shared in the clinical bulletin is also available on the Specialist Pharmacy Service website [here](#).

Good practice tips:

1. Ensure at point of receipt supporting paperwork is reviewed and information cascaded to the whole team. Expiry notices should be attached directly to the outside of the vaccine box, including the Direct Healthcare professional letter from the manufacturer.
2. Affix any expiry extension documentation to the outside of the fridge where vaccines are being stored to support the team cross check expiry information.
3. Highlight the vaccine expiry information through local safety huddles / team handovers.
4. Sites should always adhere to the post thawed expiry date at 2°C to 8°C as displayed on the post thaw label on the outer carton (see circled details on **figure 1**).
5. Any vaccine stock being moved should be transported in the original carton provided from the SPLs. Movement in the original packaging ensures that vaccinators can check the post thaw expiry information prior to vaccination.
6. Ensure expired stock is disposed of as soon as practically possible.
7. Expired stock should be disposed of locally in line with your standard operating procedure and recorded on the site wastage return.

All expired stock disposal must also be recorded in Site Stock Manager in Foundry. Accurately including batch number, expiry date, quantity (in either doses or vials) category and reason. To reduce clinical risk this action should be taken as soon as possible following expiry.

If any expired vaccine has been administered to patients, this would constitute a clinical incident and should be reported to ICARS at england.swicars@nhs.net to provide further support/follow up.

Any vaccine movement must be performed in accordance with the [policy transfer of COVID-19 vaccines between NHS Vaccination Sites](#) and be recorded on the Foundry Vaccine Transfer application. Movement of vaccine to support housebound / outreach services or to facilitate booked appointments by exception should be supported by appropriate cold chain oversight. If movement of original pack sizes is not possible to support booked demand, the stock should be transferred with a picture / photocopy of the original box (displaying the SPL post thaw label

information). Vaccinators need to be able to confirm the correct post thaw expiry of the product prior to vaccination.

Figure 1 – example of the outer carton vaccine expiry label applied by SPLs.

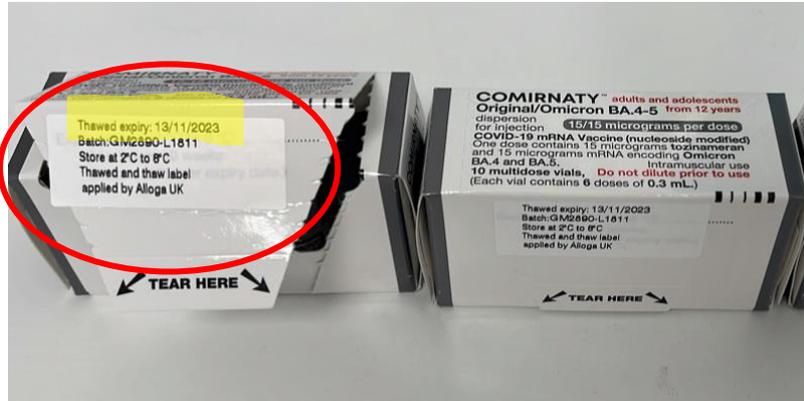


Figure 2 – the Foundry COVID-19 Workspace should be used.

