Oxford AstraZeneca vaccine – update for practice websites

New guidance has been issued for the use of the Oxford AstraZeneca Covid-19 vaccine.

This follows further reviews by the independent regulator, the MHRA, and the Commission for Human Medicines, of a very small number of people in the UK who have developed a rare blood-clotting condition since having the Oxford AstraZeneca Covid-19 vaccine.

The MHRA and Joint Committee for Vaccinations and Immunisations have emphasised that the risk of this condition is extremely small and that the benefits of the vaccine outweigh the risks for the vast majority of people. They have recommended that:

- Everyone who has had the AstraZeneca vaccine should still have a second dose of the AstraZeneca vaccine, irrespective of age, unless they have had a blood clot or have an existing risk of thrombosis (blood clotting)

- People aged 30 and over or who have a health condition that puts them at higher risk of severe Covid-19 disease should still be offered the Oxford AstraZeneca vaccine. The benefits in protecting them against the serious consequences of COVID-19 outweigh any risk of this rare condition.

- People aged 18-29 who do not have a health condition that puts them at higher risk of severe Covid-19 disease will be offered an alternative Covid-19 vaccine where available. (This has been recommended as a precaution as people under 30 are at less risk from Covid-19 and not because they are considered to be at particular risk of developing the rare blood clot.)

- People under 30 can still choose to have the Oxford AstraZeneca vaccine if this will mean they can be protected more quickly and they have been made aware of the guidance.

Please see the leaflet below that has been produced by Public Health England and the NHS to answer any questions you may have

- Leaflet on COVID-19 vaccination and blood clotting