

Immunisation Clinical Advice Response Service 13/08/21

For any COVID-19 vaccination related queries or to escalate an incident please contact:
england.swicars@nhs.net

Please note that since Monday 2nd August CARS has now become ICARS and will operate from 9am - 5pm Monday to Friday.

**PLEASE SHARE WITH ALL RELEVANT STAFF INVOLVED WITH THE
VACCINATION PROGRAMME**

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Reminder – ICARS

Please note that since Monday 2nd August, CARS has become ICARS and operates from Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm. All COVID-19 vaccination related queries or incidents should be sent to the following address: england.swicars@nhs.net.



JCVI statement on COVID-19 vaccination of children and young people aged 12 to 17 years: 4 August 2021

This statement sets out JCVI's latest considerations and advice regarding the potential extension of the COVID-19 vaccination programme to children and young people.

Please see JCVI's [first statement on COVID-19 vaccination of children and young people aged 12 to 17 years](#)

Please also see the attached system letter in relation to this statement and guidance "C1374 System Letter 16-17 yo JCVI guidance."

Vaccinating 16-17 year olds

Workforce preparedness

Following the announcement of the vaccination of 16-17 year olds there is the requirement to ensure that there is sufficient workforce in place with the appropriate training, competency and clearance to enable vaccination of this cohort through vaccination centres. The updated guidance [workforce considerations for phase 3 children's vaccination](#) document, outlines the latest workforce and training considerations for the vaccination of 16-17 year olds.

Please see the attached pdf presentation "Workforce considerations for phase 3 children's vaccination".

16 and 17 year olds – walk-in vaccinations

From **10 am on Thursday 12 August 2021**, pending national agreement, the [walk-in coronavirus \(COVID-19\) vaccination site finder](#) (formerly Grab-a-Jab) will be revised to enable people to search by postcode for vaccination sites offering walk-in vaccinations for those aged 16 years to 17 years 8 months to support first dose vaccination for that group. It will also allow sites to indicate availability of walk-in vaccinations for those aged between 17 years 9 months and 18 years old.

As per this morning's operational note sites are invited to upload their availability to vaccinate 16 and 17 year olds via walk-in to the [walk-in coronavirus \(COVID-19\) vaccination site finder](#). The operational readiness checklist is a pre-requisite for vaccinating these age groups. **Data Controllers should upload and amend site data via the Grab a Jab Data Entry to identify sites that will provide access to 16 and 17 year olds by 4pm on Wednesday 11 August 2021.** These will be verified centrally and planned to be added to the website by 10am Thursday 12 August.

Updates on vaccinating 17 year olds within 3 months of their 18th birthday

Inviting 17 year olds within 3 months of their 18th birthday to book their COVID-19 vaccinations

From tomorrow (Thursday 12 August 2021), 17 year olds who are within 3 months of their 18th birthday will be invited to book their COVID-19 vaccination through the National Booking Service (on the NHS website or by calling 119).

Text messages will be sent to this group inviting them, starting tomorrow, with letters following to those for whom there is no recorded mobile phone number. National and regional communications through the media and on social media will also be carried out.

Sites that have opted in to vaccinate this group should please ensure that booking slots are opened up to ensure this group are able to book for both first doses and second doses.

Update: Vaccination for young people turning 18 within three months

Colleagues are advised that an **update** has been made following the item on vaccinating young people turning 18 within three months, included in the Clinical Bulletin of the 4th August 2021. It follows the Patient Group Direction for Pfizer BioNTech Covid-19 Vaccine which was updated on Friday and is now available on the [NHSE-I website](#).

The below table is correct as of 9th August 2021 and replaces that which was included last week. It highlights which mechanism is required to enable administration of COVID-19 vaccines to the different paediatric cohorts. This table should be read in conjunction with the JCVI recommendation and the recent operational letters issued.

Cohorts	Valid Legal Mechanism	Number of Doses
17 and 9 months ('18')	Current PGD (6.8.21) and current National Protocol (13.4.21) or PSD.	2 doses.
All healthy 16-17year olds	Current PGD (6.8.21) or PSD	1 dose currently (under review)
16-17-year olds clinically at risk or in the other at-risk groups (in cohorts 2, 4 and 6) as outlined in the Green Book	Current PGD (6.8.21) and National Protocol (13.4.21) or PSD	2 doses
Children 12-15 yrs old at risk and household contacts of immunosuppressed (as specified by JCVI)	Current PGD (6.8.21) or PSD	1. doses

Operational note on vaccinating individuals within 3 months of their 18th birthday (including walk-ins)

Following the [Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation \(JCVI\) guidance on COVID-19 vaccinations for children and young people](#), and outlined in [our letter](#), **individuals within 3 months of their 18th birthday will shortly be invited** to book their vaccination appointment via the National Booking System (NBS). We will confirm as soon as possible the specific timing for when this change will be live in the NBS.

Vaccination centres, community pharmacies and Hospital Hubs can vaccinate individuals **within 3 months of their 18th birthday** subject to completing the clinical criteria as a self-assessment process. PCN-led sites are not required to complete the checklist but are strongly encouraged to review it and ensure their sites remain compliant.

Meeting these criteria is also a precondition for vaccinating individuals within 3 months of their 18th birthday arriving as 'walk-ins' at vaccination sites.

These criteria have been developed to help providers identify the minimum requirements for vaccinating children. All providers must meet the requirements regardless of the delivery model. They cover the following:

- Safeguarding
- Consent
- Staffing
- Environment and processes
- Emergency Preparedness
- Legal Framework.

When planning the operational implementation of this guidance, sites must ensure there are appropriate mechanisms for patients aged less than 18 years to be identified on check-in and routed so they are seen by appropriate, competent and trained staff.

Staff working with individuals under the age of 18 must have an appropriate level of disclosure and barring service check. The full details, including how to obtain a fast track check, is [here](#).

Vaccination of children and young people (CYP) Updates

Care Quality Commission

We have received the following advice from the CQC regarding the registration requirements for sites.

The advice from CQC is that the regulated activity TDDI ('Treatment of Disease, Disorder or Injury') will cover vaccinations for CYP so there are no further actions that sites need to take for vaccination of children.

However, the CQC highlight that the service should assure that:

- Staff deployed be appropriately qualified, skilled and experienced to administer vaccines to children.
- Staff vaccinating children are subject to the required enhanced DBS check against the children's barred list.
- There is age appropriate emergency medical equipment available and staff are trained in its use for paediatric patients.
- Consent for vaccination is obtained according to the principles expected for all treatment, for example, consent to be obtained from a child following an assessment of their competence (are they Gillick competent?) and/or consent is obtained from the person with parental responsibility for the child.

- Information on aftercare is given to the child and/or carers that is age-appropriate and advises them about what to do should the child become unwell.

The service should be able to provide assurance of the above if required.

Children Readiness Check List

We have also been asked to clarify which staff need to adhere to the standards contained within the Readiness Check-List for Children Cohorts. The standards apply to the staff that will be participating in the vaccination of children. This is not necessarily all the staff employed by the provider. Therefore, providers are able to declare compliance with the standards providing they are able to ensure their adult only staff do not vaccinate children and those staff identified as vaccinating children are all compliant.

Children Resources

PHE have developed a number of resources to support colleagues vaccinating children and young people. They are available here and include:

- [Information for children and young people on what to expect after COVID-19 vaccination](#)
- [COVID-19 Vaccination for at risk children and young people \(aged 12 – 15\)](#)

Please note, FAQs are currently being developed for children and young people with learning disability, autism or both and should be available soon.

Children under the age of 16 must not be vaccinated in a vaccination centre or community pharmacy setting.

This guidance is also not intended to cover vaccinating children under 16 years in PCN-led settings or Hospital Hubs.

The criteria supersede previously issued guidance from 22 July 2021 ('Guidance on 'walk-in' appointments for people aged 12-17').

In line with [JCVI guidance](#) and as currently set out in the Green Book, young people aged 16 and 17 years who are at higher risk of serious COVID-19 (cohort 6) or are health and social care workers (cohort 2) are also eligible for COVID-19 vaccination and could also attend any delivery model. Sites must meet the criteria outlined in the self-assessment checklist, prior to vaccinating these individuals.

Actions required

- [Regional teams](#) are responsible for ensuring that sites vaccinating individuals within 3 months of their 18th birthday, and other eligible individuals between the age of 16 and 17, meet the clinical criteria.
- [Vaccination Centres, Community Pharmacies, and Hospital Hubs](#) are required to self-assess based on the checklist.

- Once Vaccination Centres, Community Pharmacies, and Hospital Hubs have self-assessed, if the vaccination site is on the NBS, it must indicate its readiness in QFlow to vaccinate individuals within 3 months of their 18th birthday and other eligible individuals aged 16 and 17 years. Only sites that have this functionality enabled will be shown to people in this age range on the NBS.
- If your site meets the requirements in the checklist, please update Qflow by 12pm on 5 August (or as soon as your site does meet the requirements, if your site is not ready immediately) so that individuals are able to book slots at your site.
- Sites must not vaccinate eligible individuals aged 16 and 17 until they are able to meet the requirements. We expect all sites to work to meet the full list of requirements as soon as possible and self-declare immediately once the requirements are met.
- PCN-led sites are strongly encouraged to review the checklist and ensure they are compliant. QFlow functionality has been centrally enabled meaning patients within 3 months of their 18th birthday can book an appointment at the PCN-led site via the NBS where slots are available. If any PCN site does not comply with the requirements of the checklist and needs to prevent patients within 3 months of their 18th birthday from booking an appointment at their site on the NBS, they will need to update their attributes in QFlow by 12pm on 5 August.
- Kit –
 - Vaccination Centres: Central supplies will provide face shields and pocket masks as per the checklist which should arrive at sites by 4 August. HME/ viral filters will be supplied in due course. Vaccination Centres do not need to place an order for this kit.
 - Community Pharmacies: If you need to order kit as per the checklist, please place an order via the Unipart Customer Services Helpdesk.
 - PCN-led sites and Hospital Hubs: If supply is needed as per the checklist, sites should order using their normal supply process

Paediatric cardiac arrest in vaccination settings

Colleagues are encouraged to review the following information from the [Resuscitation Council UK](#) with information on how to support a child or young person suffering cardiac arrest in a vaccination setting.

The [resource is available here](#).

Resuscitation Council UK were partners in developing the children check-list and this guidance is consistent with the BLS requirements within the children check-list.

Update: Consent in the vaccination process

We have updated the Consent briefing that was previously issued in March of this year.

This now includes the requirements around consenting children and specific information around consent within the national protocol framework.

Colleagues are requested to view the link to the document, available [here](#).

COVID-19 vaccination: information for healthcare practitioners updated

Public Health England's [guidance for healthcare practitioners](#) about the coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccination programme was revised on 6 August 2021.

Updates

1. Updated to include - revisions to the Green Book COVID-19 Chapter - GBS and Capillary Leak syndrome - vaccination of 12 to 17 year olds - consent for children and young people
2. Appendix 2 revised to detail transition from use of the Pfizer BioNTech vaccine under Reg 174 to use under Conditional Marketing Authorisation

Vaccination of people working or deployed in care homes: operational guidance

Please see link to: [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) vaccination of people working or deployed in care homes: operational guidance](#) Published 4 August 2021 - DHSC

We understand that this guidance is currently going through NHS structures at national level and there will be further guidance about what it means for the NHS next week. To note the key timescales 16th September – last date for care home workers to get 1st dose so they can be fully vaccinated by the time the regulations come into force. Regulations come into force 11th November 2021.

Whilst it will be illegal after 22nd November to let anyone into a Care Home who does not comply with the regulation there was a clear national message that it is not up to Care Home managers to police the policy – it is up to providers to send the right people. We will await the further guidance and pick up conversations as required next week.

Assurance - Vaccine Checklists

As part of the new regional assurance model, assurance activities will continue to be accessed through Foundry. The current aspects of Foundry will remain, but the separate vaccine checklists that were previously completed separately, for Pfizer and Moderna will also be

transitioned to Foundry. Whilst this process takes place, the checklists for adding additional vaccine types will remain and can be accessed on the [FutureNHS Vaccination Centres workspace at this link](#), as part of the overall assurance process. As soon as the checklists are available as part of Foundry, they will be removed from FutureNHS and everyone will be notified.

Patient Group Direction for COVID-19 mRNA vaccine BNT162b2 (Pfizer/BioNTech) updated

The [Patient Group Direction](#) (PGD) for the administration of COVID-19 mRNA vaccine BNT162b2 to individuals in accordance with the national COVID-19 vaccination programme has been updated to take into account of the updated JCVI guidance on vaccinating people from 12 years old and upwards along with other revisions.

Effective Management of COVID-19 Vaccines Cold Chain

All staff involved in handling COVID-19 vaccines, from supply logistics to vaccine administration, have a responsibility to ensure that cold chain processes are maintained. This is to assure the quality and efficacy of vaccines and minimise the risk of vaccine wastage and secondary effects such as the need to re-vaccinate patients.

The majority of the vaccines in use within the COVID-19 vaccination programme continue to be stored and handled correctly. However, cold chain breaches have occurred at steady levels since the programme started.

Some of the reasons for cold chain incidents include:

- Disconnection of power supply to fridges, including human error
- Fridge temperature excursions not identified and dealt with in a timely manner
- Non-adherence to standard operating procedures, including at the time of vaccine delivery
- Poor packaging within cool boxes, for example not following manufacturer instructions for the placement of ice packs
- Vaccines not being returned to fridges within the correct timeframe.

Vaccination sites can access useful guidance from the Specialist Pharmacy Service to support [Cold chain management for covid-19 vaccines](#). The [Green Book \(Chapter 3\)](#) also provides detailed guidance for maintaining the vaccine cold chain.

All vaccination sites should ensure that robust, best practice processes and procedures for cold chain management are in place and being followed. The Clinical Workstream has produced a [self-audit tool](#) to help sites assess current practice and identify the improvements that may be required to meet the essential standards for effective cold chain management processes.

One aspect of cold chain management is the requirement to monitor fridge temperatures and act on any deviations. Access to the fridge temperature history and regular review of this can reduce vaccine waste considerably. Sites can refer to the fridge manual for the full specifications and are advised to ensure that they are optimising the use of functions available. The manuals

for all fridges, which have been supplied by the national programme, can be obtained from the Customer Service (Unipart) desk or from the [NHS Futures Supply and Delivery Hub](#). Some sites will have fridges which have a data logger that is independent of the main power supply.

For sites that do not have a fridge with a data logging function of this kind and do not already have an independent data logger in situ, data loggers can be ordered from the Customer Service (Unipart) desk (CS@nhsvaccinesupport.com / 0800 678 1650 / 0700-1900 Mon- Sun). The delivery of items will be made on standard delivery days, however there may be a delay in fulfilling orders due to a national delay in receipt of stock. For this reason, sites may wish to procure the devices via local mechanisms.

Vaccinating Seafarers

Seafarers are a specialised international workforce vital to support National and International supply lines for critical items and general trade.

This document describes a range of the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) which supports services providing vaccination to this group.

For vaccination centres only: NHS App/COVID Pass banners

Vaccination centres will shortly be receiving a pull-up banner produced by NHS X to use in your building as part of the NHS App/COVID Pass campaign. The purpose of the banner is to drive awareness and to encourage members of the public to download the NHS App/COVID Pass.

Please erect the banner when it arrives and place it in an area where there is high footfall of members of the public attending to have their vaccination.

If your centre is to cease operating as a vaccination centre at any point in the future and is not a health centre in its usual capacity, please take the banner to a local GP surgery, health centre or a local chemist/pharmacy. This way, the banner will continue to be seen by members of the public.

If you have any questions about the banners please contact Stephen.breen@nhsx.nhs.uk or Stephen.lynn@nhsx.nhs.uk.

All COVID-19 vaccination queries and incidents should be directed to:
england.swicars@nhs.net