



ICARS Newsletter

Issue 78: 4th March 2022

Immunisation Clinical Advice Response Service

About this bulletin:

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

PLEASE SHARE WITH ALL RELEVANT STAFF INVOLVED WITH THE
VACCINATION PROGRAMME

Please note that ICARS operates from 9am - 5pm Monday to Friday.

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1. UPDATE: Living with COVID-19 White Paper

Dear colleagues,

Please find below C1594 - Living with COVID white paper – update letter.

This information can also be found here:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/primary-care/infection-control/> and here <https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/secondary-care/infection-control/> on the website.

Living with COVID-19 white paper – update

Earlier this week the Prime Minister outlined the plan for Living with COVID-19.

We are writing to provide you an initial update in the light of this plan and to outline the areas that are being reviewed and may change, and to highlight those areas that will remain the same.

NHS staff who test positive

Healthcare staff who have tested positive for COVID-19 should not attend work until they have had two negative LFD test results taken 24 hours apart. The first test should not be taken before day 5 after their initial positive test. These tests need to be 24 hours apart, and providing they are medically fit, they can return to work on the morning of day 6 providing they tested negative 24 hours earlier.

UKHSA will be updating the guidance for staff and patients exposed to COVID-19 and this will be posted on the UKHSA guidance pages on the [24 February](#).

In line with previous NHS England and NHS Improvement [guidance](#) published in March 2020, NHS organisations and their subcontractors are expected to ensure that any member of staff, including bank and sub-contractor staff, who have to be physically present at an NHS facility to carry out their duties, receives full pay for any period in which they cannot attend work as a result of public health advice.

As throughout the pandemic, it is vital that organisations continue to work closely with their sub-contractors to manage infection risk.

For Agency staff, in line with [previous guidance](#) published on NHS Employers website, the agency must ensure that the staff being sent to undertake a shift have not tested positive for COVID-19.

The [Temporary COVID-19 - Terms and Conditions guidance](#), which includes arrangements for COVID-19 related sickness absence will remain in place. As such, there should be no immediate change in the payments made to eligible individuals who are required not to attend work due to COVID-19.

For Primary Care staff, in line with previous [guidance](#) published by NHS England and NHS Improvement, general practices must ensure staff are not required to work if they test positive for COVID-19.

Testing for patients and staff

The Prime Minister outlined changes to a variety of testing protocols; we will be writing to you in the coming weeks with the specific detail of the various testing protocols for patients and staff. Current testing protocols should continue until further guidance is received.

For now, NHS staff should continue to access their tests via the universal offer online until advised otherwise and community pharmacies will continue to provide a supply of tests until 31 March. In extremis, regional testing leads will have a supply of tests to be accessed on an emergency basis provided to them by UKHSA. We will communicate further about testing provision for NHS staff and patients as this is agreed with UKHSA and DHSC.

Reporting test results remains a requirement and we should encourage all staff to report the results of their twice weekly asymptomatic tests whether positive or negative at <https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result>.

Infection, Prevention and Control

There are no immediate changes to IPC requirements. This includes the requirement for staff, patients and visitors to wear a mask/face covering in healthcare settings. The consistent application of IPC measures, alongside the roll out of the vaccine programme and staff and patient testing, remains the most effective defence against the entry and spread of COVID-19 in healthcare settings.

Visiting guidance

The visiting guidance is being reviewed in light of the Living with COVID-19 plans and we will be communicating the outcome of this review shortly so that visitors can attend hospitals and healthcare settings in a manner that continues to protect patients and staff.

COVID treatments

Supporting the roll-out of COVID-19 treatments for non-hospitalised patients remains a NHS priority. Since 10 February, COVID-19 medicine delivery units have been able to assess patients who test positive via a lateral flow or PCR test (previously only PCR). The Prime Minister has said symptomatic testing for vulnerable patients will remain available which will support access to COVID-19 treatments, but we will notify you of any further changes. The latest information for the NHS is available at: www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/community-treatments/.

Thank you for your ongoing support.

2. NEW: JCVI advice on Spring boosters and Autumn vaccination programme

On 21 February 2022, JCVI advised that a further booster dose should be offered to adults aged 75 years and over, residents in a care home for older adults, and individuals aged 12 years and over who are immunosuppressed, as defined in the Green Book. JCVI advise that the interval period should be around six months after the last vaccine dose.

The advice also gave JCVI's interim advice that an autumn 2022 programme of vaccinations will be indicated for people who are at higher risk of severe COVID-19, such as those of older age and in clinical risk groups. You can read the full advice [here](#) and the press release is [here](#).

Further operational and planning information will follow.

3. NEW: Next steps for the NHS COVID-19 vaccination programme planning and delivery

On 23 February, we issued our system letter to set out the current priorities and next steps for the COVID-19 vaccination programme for 2022/23. Please find the system letter available [here](#).

JCVI advised on 21 February on COVID-19 vaccinations in 2022 ([here](#)). In the context of the JCVI described uncertainty, there are three key priorities for 2022/23:

- i. continued access to COVID-19 vaccination;
- ii. delivery of an autumn COVID-19 vaccination campaign if advised by JCVI; and

- iii. development of detailed contingency plans to rapidly increase capacity, if required. Across each, the focus must remain on increasing uptake in all communities and addressing unwarranted variation.

Over the next few weeks, we will continue to work with systems to prepare for the year ahead and for systems to develop operational plans for the next months. Systems will further engage with their providers to understand capacity and to support the delivery of the priorities outlined in our system letter and planning parameters.

3a) NEW: Planning Parameters for 2022

The included in this document, and the supporting information letter give systems the basis on which to develop detailed operational plans for the next six months, and provisional plans to provide autumn boosters should we be instructed to do so. This provides an opportunity for systems to rethink network design to best meet the needs of their population, albeit with ongoing uncertainties. Because the autumn booster campaign will only be decided later in the year, we will use the provisional plans for September 2022-April 2023 to work with systems and with government to ensure we have the right financial and commercial mechanisms in place to best support system delivery.

Systems need to continue to strengthen their local partnerships, especially with local authorities, working together to design and deliver a continued offer for the year ahead, with clear ownership at each level, drawing on the insight, experience and expertise of all partners.

A vaccine modelling pack has been developed for each ICS. Systems should use this information, together with local data, insights and analysis to inform their approach.

Delivery plans will need to adhere to the following parameters outline in the attached document:



C1597 Planning
parameters for 2022

4. NEW: Comirnaty® (10 micrograms/dose) deliveries

Following some reports of Comirnaty® (10 micrograms/dose) boxes arriving on their side in delivery packaging, Pfizer has confirmed that there would be no impact on product quality and sites can be reassured that products arriving in this way can be used as normal.

5. UPDATE: Cohort eligibility and operational status

[This resource](#) has been reviewed, with small updates this week to note recent JCVI advice. The resource summarises which cohorts are eligible for vaccination, under what parameters, and how they can access the offer. We recommend that teams avoid printing the document as it will rapidly become out of date. You are advised to save the [hyperlink](#) where the revised version will be uploaded weekly.

We have also updated our poster showing main information about who is eligible, which is saved on the workspace [here](#). This will be updated regularly in the folder for public-facing [Communications Resources](#).

6. NEW: 5-11 year old Vaccination Programme

6a) NEW: Vaccinations for all 5-11-year olds – system letter

Please click [here](#) to view the NHSEI system letter issued 18 February, following the guidance from the [JCVI to make a non-urgent offer of COVID-19 vaccines to all children aged five to 11 in England](#), in order to increase protection against potential future waves of COVID-19.

6b) NEW: Workforce considerations 5-11-year olds

[On 16th February 2022](#) the JCVI recommended extension of the COVID-19 vaccination to children aged 5-11 who are not in an at-risk group. A further [system letter](#) published on the same day set out the next steps for the system to begin vaccinating this cohort.

The [children's workforce & training guidance pack](#) has been updated and provides:

- Additional design principles to support the vaccination of this cohort in vaccination centres, plotting the vaccination journey “through the eyes of a child”
- Vaccination pathway adjustments recommended and an illustrative workforce model example to support

6c) NEW: Training requirements for children 5-11 not at risk

The additional training requirements for vaccinations of children aged 5-11 are set out on page 25 in the [Workforce Considerations for Phase 3 Children's Vaccinations guidance](#). The same training requirements apply to all 5-11 year olds, both at-risk and not-at-risk.

Clinical staff need to complete the [Comirnaty 10 micrograms/dose vaccine-specific e-learning module and assessment](#), be competent at working with children and managing anxiety, have an understanding of the law regarding consent for this cohort and have watched the "[Introduction to Level 3 Safeguarding Children \(COVID-19 Vaccination\)](#)" video (as a minimum). Non-clinical staff do not need to complete this training.

Clinical leads need to understand the impact of the environment on the child and be empowered to make necessary adjustments. See page 25 of the [workforce guidance](#) for links to supportive training materials and resources.

6d) NEW: Vaccinations of 5-11 year olds at risk children

Following JCVI advice ([here](#)) on 16 February 2022, about the vaccination of 5-11 year olds who are not in a clinical risk, guidance was issued to systems through RVOCs on 18th February. It is important to the programme to ensure all children within this cohort are offered and invited to have a vaccination as soon as possible. The primary offer will be available from 4th April 2022 in Vaccination Centres and Community Pharmacists, with deployment not displacing the vaccination of other cohorts or the delivery of other paediatric, non-COVID-19 immunisation programmes. Operational guidance is being developed in collaboration with regions and will be issued next week. Further information will follow in the next bulletin.

PCN Groupings have been asked to continue to prioritise the vaccination of children aged 5 to 11 years old in a clinical risk group (as defined in the Green Book), or who are a household contact of someone who is immunosuppressed, in line with previous [guidance](#). This is because it remains important that this clinical risk group are encouraged and supported to book an appointment asap to protect them against COVID-19.

7. UPDATE: Overseas vaccine guidance

7a) UPDATE: Overseas vaccine guidance

UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) have updated their [guidance](#) on vaccination requirements for people who have received doses overseas to include requirements for children. It includes all vaccines that are commonly used globally. Please note that the guidance provides advice about ongoing clinical care, not on eligibility for a COVID pass.

7b) NEW: Vaccination Data Resolution Service and Overseas Vaccines Validation Service

The NHS is encouraging people registered with a GP practice in England to check that their vaccination records are up to date, and to contact the Vaccination Data Resolution Service (VDRS) or the Overseas Vaccines Validation Service if their record isn't showing correctly.

It's important that records are accurate so the NHS can invite the right people at the right time if vaccinations are due. It might also mean a hassle-free journey for those planning to use an NHS COVID Pass to travel abroad.

Everyone over 12 who has had a COVID-19 vaccination in England can view their record using the [NHS COVID Pass](#) web pages or, for those over 13, through the NHS App.

If a member of the public had their vaccinations in England but there is an error on their record, or they have a missing or incomplete record, they should call 119 and ask to be referred to the VDRS. The VDRS will then aim to contact them within 5 working days. Please note they need to be registered with an English GP practice to use this service.

People over 16 who have had one or more COVID-19 vaccinations abroad that are approved by WHO can [book an appointment](#) at a vaccination site via the NHS website to show evidence of their vaccinations and request an update to their record.

Anyone intending to use their [NHS COVID Pass](#) for travel purposes is encouraged to check their COVID pass status before booking. If their record isn't showing correctly, they should call 119.

An NHS COVID Pass cannot be gained through the VDRS or the Overseas Vaccines Validation Service but instead needs to be accessed via the NHS COVID Pass web pages or via the NHS app.

Please note: Any queries relating to incorrect personal information on a patient record (e.g. name, address) will still need to be resolved by their GP practice.

7c) NEW: Overseas Vaccine Record Validation Service

The Version 6 Data Entry Template is now available for use in site overseas inboxes and a copy has been uploaded onto FutureNHS. Version 6 should be used with immediate effect.

Please find it here: [Overseas Vaccination Event Data Template - COVID-19 Vaccination Programme - FutureNHS Collaboration Platform](#)

8. NEW: Workforce Support and IT systems Updates

8a) NEW: GP Covid Vaccine Dashboard – issue resolved

On 15 February we informed you that the Vaccination History Report feature within the GP Covid Vaccine Dashboard was unavailable whilst data issues were resolved. These have been fixed and the report feature is now available to use. Furthermore, the dashboard is on track to deliver the inclusion of the 5-11 years old 'at risk' cohort and 12-15 years old 'at risk' cohort from Friday 4 March.

If you experience any issues with the dashboard, please contact the National Service Desk: ssd.nationalservicedesk@nhs.net or call 0300 303 5035.

8b) REMINDER: Vaccination Operational Support Teams (VOST) are available to support vaccinations (COVID-19 and Flu) and 12–17-year-olds

See the table below for teams that are currently available for deployment, along with areas where teams can be deployed for the week commencing 24th February 2022. Please contact your [lead employer](#) for the latest deployment details and availability within your area.

WC 24/02/2022	Not deployed and are available		Deployed VOST teams	
	Lead Employer	Location	Lead Employer	Location
North West			St Helens and Knowlesly (Cheshire and Merseyside)	The Oval
South West			Somerset Devon	Gateway Torbay / Barnstable
Midlands	Coventry and Warwickshire	Various Bedworth		
East of England			Cambridge Community Services	TBC

VOST teams are trained and ready to support COVID-19 and flu vaccinations, including 12-17 year olds and can often be deployed at pace. They are made up of an equal number of Registered Healthcare Professionals and Unregistered Vaccinators as outlined below:

Team of 6 -1 x Clinical Supervisor, 2 x Registered Healthcare Professionals & 3 x unregistered Vaccinators

8c) NEW: Pinnacle Point of Care system updates

We are aware of an issue in some Point of Care systems resulting in Spikevax (Moderna) presenting as a suggested vaccine type for under 18s. Spikevax (Moderna) is only recommended in *exceptional circumstances* in this group and should be individually assessed in accordance with the Patient Group Direction (PGD) and National Protocol. The Pinnacle Point of Care system is being updated to enable the correct recording of Comirnaty 10mcg use by date of 70 days, which is expected to take effect in the week commencing 21 February. Pinnacle will issue direct guidance information to their users.

8d) NEW: Help improve the Point Of Care system(s)

The NHS vaccines programme needs your help to improve the Point of Care system(s). We'd like to talk with vaccinators, sites leads and those who are responsible for managing point of care systems/ responsible for making decisions when it comes to Point of Care.

We're looking to conduct interviews over the coming weeks.

Interested in taking part? Please complete this [survey](#) and we will get in touch to arrange a convenient time.

9. NEW: St John Ambulance volunteer vaccinator role

Throughout the COVID-19 vaccination programme we have continued to evolve the workforce model to meet the needs of the programme, including the volunteer workforce offer. SJA initially provided three roles for volunteers

1. Patient advocate
2. Post vaccination observation (dual trained in-patient advocate role)
3. Volunteer vaccinator (Cross trained in patient advocate and post vaccination observation role) As new volunteers have joined the programme following the national recruitment campaign the volunteers have all been recruited and trained as volunteer vaccinators, which means that they are able to fulfil all three roles on a vaccination site. To ensure optimal use of the volunteers, from the 01st March 2022 SJA will be advertising all patient advocate and post vaccination observation requests as volunteer vaccinators. This is because all of the volunteer vaccinators are equipped with the training and skills to do all three of the initially contracted roles and this will enable sites to utilise all available SJA volunteers.

SJA are looking to upskill the existing patient advocates and post vaccination trained volunteers to enable them to be able to fulfil the new role requirement. Where there are existing sites that only use patient advocates or

post vaccination observation roles there will be a discussion about this transition.

Requesting SJA support is straightforward and can be accessed by completing the very short form at the following link: St John Ambulance - Vaccination Workforce Request Form. (office.com).

If you have any specific questions or how SJA can support you, then please contact Graham Ellis at graham.ellis@sja.org.uk.

If you have need for any further support or information, then you can also reach out to the COVID-19 Workforce Hotline number on 0800 015 7707.

10.NEW: Training Resources

10a) NEW: Case studies

The COVID-19 Vaccination Programme Improvement Hub has published a number of case studies to share learning and improvement work across the programme.

A new case study is available sharing how Modality Lewisham PCN's Jenner Health Centre is using the 'Make Every Contact Count' approach in their COVID-19 vaccination clinic.

Please see the full case study [here](#). If you have an improvement or shared learning case study you would like to share, please email c6.cag@nhs.net.

10b) NEW: Webinars

Vaccination programme shared learning community webinar

The recording of the shared learning webinar held on Wednesday 23rd February, 'Supporting people with additional communication needs', will be available on the Improvement Hub to [view](#) here.

Future webinars will take place on Wednesday 9th March at 2pm, with the topic and registration details to be shared shortly. Please see the Improvement hub calendar for [details](#).

Previous Learning Community Webinars can be accessed on the [Improvement Hub](#).

COVID-19 Vaccination in Pregnancy: Masterclass for midwives

Wednesday 2 March 2022, 12:00pm – 1:15pm

All healthcare professionals have a responsibility to make every contact count in informing and encouraging pregnant women to get vaccinated against COVID-19.

On 2 March Professor Jacqueline Dunkley-Bent, Chief Midwife for England, is hosting a second masterclass for midwives and other interested NHS professionals, to give objective advice on vaccination, based on the best available evidence.

Join national experts from the UKHSA, MHRA, NHSEI, RCM and more for talks on the risks of COVID-19 infection in pregnancy; the science behind vaccination; common questions and concerns; and what midwives and other professionals can do to safeguard women, parents and babies from COVID-19.

There will also be an opportunity to raise questions and concerns in a Q&A with our expert panel.

Please [register to attend here](#) by 5pm on Tuesday 1 March.

10c) Useful Links

General queries email: england.pccovidvaccine@nhs.net

LVS and Roving SOP Publications:

Standard Operating Procedure for mobile and roving models (updated 7 October 2021) [here](#)

Standard Operating Procedure for Local Vaccination Services (updated 8 October 2021) [here](#)

Phase 3 FAQs:

[Phase 3 FAQs for GPs / PCN-led sites](#)

[FAQs Pharmacy-led Phase 3 LVS](#)

Press notice: [Press notice: JCVI issues advice on third vaccination for severely immunosuppressed](#)

JCVI full advice: [JCVI advice on third dose for severely immunosuppressed](#)

Clinical updates: you can find all clinical updates [here](#)

[Coronavirus vaccinations](#): NHS Digital 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. If you are not already a member, please email: P_C_N-manager@future.nhs.uk

[COVID-19 Vaccine Equalities Connect and Exchange Hub](#) is a community of practices on the Future NHS platform. NHS, local authority, public and voluntary sector staff working to increase vaccine uptake, share ideas, evidence, resources, case studies and blueprints to increase uptake of the COVID19 vaccine within all communities. Members also have access to peer-to-peer support and a programme of regular lunch and learn webinars and live discussion forums. To join, please [register for an account](#) and once registered you can [join the Hub](#).

[Supply and Delivery Hub](#) helps you access key information in a timely way and help support you to deliver your local vaccination service. Here you will find the latest delivery information (vaccine and vaccine consumables as well as non-vaccine consumables, equipment and PPE), alongside the latest supply chain and customer service FAQs and other helpful information.

National Workforce Support Offer – more details:

- [National Workforce Support Offer Toolkit](#) provides more detail about the National Workforce Support Offer and is a practical guide for local vaccination service leads.
- 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 Futures NHS pages [LVS Workforce](#) and [case studies/FAQs](#) and recently guidance for [PCN groupings](#) and [community pharmacy](#)
- Contact the national workforce team direct via PCNCP.workforceescalation@nhs.net

[COVID-19 Vaccination Improvement Hub](#)