



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

POLICY AND STRATEGY, DOCUMENT

COVID-19 spring booster 2024 (WHC/2024/009)

A letter to health workers on the 2024 COVID-19 spring booster campaign.

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Not applicable.

For action by:

- Chief executives, health boards / trusts.
- Immunisation leads, health boards / trusts.
- Immunisation coordinators, health boards.

- Vaccination operational leads, health boards / trusts.
- COVID-19 vaccination leads, health boards / trusts.
- Medical directors, health boards / trusts.
- Directors of primary care, health boards / trusts.
- Nurse executive directors, health boards / trusts.
- Chief pharmacists, health boards / trusts.
- Directors of public health, health boards / trusts.
- Executive Director of Public Health, Public Health Wales.
- Head Vaccine Preventable Disease Programme, Public Health Wales.
- Director of Planning, Vaccination Programme Wales, NHS Executive.
- Community Pharmacy Wales.
- General Practitioner Council, Wales.
- General practitioners.
- Community pharmacists.

Sender:

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COVID-19 spring booster vaccination programme 2024

Dear Colleagues,

The Welsh Government has accepted the latest advice from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI), which has advised a spring COVID-19 booster vaccination should be offered to our most vulnerable citizens in 2024.

The primary aim of the COVID-19 vaccination programme is the prevention of severe COVID-19 disease (hospitalisation and mortality).

Eligible cohorts

The JCVI advise that a booster dose of COVID-19 vaccine should be offered to:

- adults aged 75 years and over
- residents in a care home for older adults
- individuals aged 6 months and over who are immunosuppressed (as defined in tables 3 or 4 in the COVID-19 chapter of the Green Book)

This should be offered around 6 months after the last vaccine dose, although operational flexibility around the timing of the spring dose in relation to the last vaccine dose is considered appropriate (with a minimum interval of three months between doses). More information on operational flexibility will be provided in the [COVID-19 chapter of the Green Book](#).

This letter is aimed at health professionals who are responsible for commissioning and delivering the COVID-19 vaccination programme in Wales. We encourage you to share this guidance with all those involved in delivering

the programme in your area.

Programme start and end date

The COVID-19 spring booster programme will run between 1 April and 30 June 2024. There will be some limited flexibility into July, for those who are unable to receive a booster within the main programme window, due to illness.

Vaccine supply

The JCVI has made the following recommendations on the vaccine products for each cohort.

For use in all individuals aged 18 years and over:

- Pfizer-BioNTech mRNA (Comirnaty) Omicron XBB.1.5 vaccine, dose: 30 micrograms
- Moderna mRNA (Spikevax) XBB.1.5 vaccine, dose: 50 micrograms

For young people aged 12 to 17 years:

- Pfizer-BioNTech mRNA (Comirnaty) Omicron XBB.1.5 vaccine, dose: 30 micrograms

For children aged 5 years to 11 years of age:

- Pfizer-BioNTech mRNA (Comirnaty) Omicron XBB.1.5 vaccine, dose: 10 micrograms

For children aged 6 months to 4 years of age:

- Pfizer-BioNTech mRNA (Comirnaty) Omicron XBB.1.5 vaccine, dose: 3

micrograms

The **Green Book chapter** will provide further clinical advice on the use of the vaccine.

Programme ambitions

Health boards are expected to continue to maximise vaccine uptake, minimise vaccine waste, retain their focus on reaching the most vulnerable, and understand and address inequity by ensuring access for all eligible people.

With this in mind, we expect:

- all those eligible for a spring booster to receive an invite for vaccination
- health boards should make every effort to maximise uptake across all cohorts ensuring that:
 - uptake levels are maintained or improved^[footnote 1] for those over 75 years of age and those resident in a care home for older adults, and that every effort is made to achieve 75% uptake for these cohorts
 - by taking account of the challenges faced in encouraging the immunosuppressed to come forward, all possible interventions which could improve uptake^[footnote 1] for this cohort are explored and any barriers to vaccination are removed
 - the gap is reduced between uptake rates^[footnote 1] in the least and most deprived areas of the health board

I am very conscious that planning for this programme will be undertaken by teams who are still delivering the 2023 to 2024 Winter Respiratory Vaccination Programme. Your hard work in making these programmes a success is very much appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Sir Frank Atherton
Chief Medical Officer / Medical Director NHS Wales

Footnotes

[1] Compared to the 2023 spring booster programme.

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