

WELSH HEALTH CIRCULAR



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Issue Date: 09/05/23

STATUS: ACTION / INFORMATION

CATEGORY: PUBLIC HEALTH

Title: COVID-19 Vaccination Observation Periods/ Vaccination following recovery from COVID-19

Date of Expiry/Review: Not applicable

For Action by:

Chief Executives, Health Boards/Trusts
Immunisation Leads, Health Boards/Trusts
Immunisation Coordinators, Health Boards
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 of Vaccine Preventable Disease Programme, Public Health Wales
Director of Planning, Vaccination Programme Wales
Community Pharmacy Wales
General Practitioner Council, Wales
General practitioners
Community pharmacists

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Dear Colleague,

With the COVID-19 spring booster vaccination programme well underway, and the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) [statement](#) outlining the COVID-19 vaccination of infants aged 6 months to 4 years in clinical risk groups announced on the 6 April, I would like to remind colleagues of the guidance on post-vaccination observation periods, both for those receiving a booster and those receiving a primary dose of a COVID-19 vaccine.

Firstly, adults and children with a history of allergy should continue to be managed in accordance with the advice set out [Chapter 14a](#) of the Green Book.

For adults and children without a history of allergy (as described in the Green Book), the universal requirement for a 15-minute observation period is currently suspended on the recommendation of the UK Chief Medical Officers and with the agreement of the Commission on Human Medicines. However, in accordance with the guidance set out in [Welsh Health Circular 2023/09](#), the following groups should continue to receive a 15-minute post-vaccination observation period.

- Individuals registered as learning disabled receiving a COVID-19 vaccine for the first time.
- Adults and children lacking capacity receiving a COVID-19 vaccine brand for the first time.

The guidance on observation periods is kept under constant review. Any changes will be communicated to colleagues immediately.

I would also like to take this opportunity to clarify that it is no longer necessary to defer vaccination for adults or children after recovery from a recent episode of compatible symptoms, whether or not the patient has been tested for COVID-19.

Thank you all for your continued efforts in delivering this vital and highly successful vaccination programme.

Yours sincerely,



Sir Frank Atherton
Chief Medical Officer / Medical Director NHS Wales