



Oifig an Stiúrthóra Cúnta Náisiúnta
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Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
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Update on Spring COVID-19 Booster Campaign

Dear Pharmacist,

I refer to [Circular NCO-11-2023](#) COVID-19 Booster Vaccination Campaign Spring 2024, dated 14th March 2024.

It has been confirmed that the spring booster campaign commences on **22nd April 2024** and will continue until **31st May 2024**.

The following groups are eligible for a spring booster:

- those aged 80 years and older.
- those living in long term care facilities for older adults.
- those aged 5 years and older with immunocompromise associated with a suboptimal response to vaccination.

NIAC also recommend that the spring booster should be made available for those aged 70-79 years who, following discussion with a healthcare provider, request vaccination.

Recommended intervals are as per the NIAC guidance; however, those eligible may be offered the spring booster at a 3 months interval after their last COVID-19 vaccine or infection to ensure they get their spring booster before the end of May.

While the spring booster programme is aimed for completion by the end of May, it is recognised that in some cases, given the timeframe, vaccinations may run into June. Ideally all spring boosters should be completed by 14th June, this will then allow for a sufficient interval period to elapse, to enable those vaccinated to receive their autumn booster.

If eligible patients from the groups listed above come forward after 14th June, then clinical discretion should be used to assess the risk, benefit and impact on autumn booster timing before administering a spring booster.

Pregnant women, in the appropriate stage of pregnancy and where the appropriate time since last dose of vaccine has elapsed, remain eligible for booster doses throughout the year.



Primary Course Vaccinations

Comirnaty® XBB.1.5. is now approved for Primary course vaccinations, including additional immunocompromised dose, as well as booster doses. Community Pharmacies continue to offer vaccination to those 12 years and over who require Primary course vaccination.

Please note that there have been changes to the Primary dose schedule - please refer to [NIAC Immunisation Guidelines](#).

Any clinical queries in relation to the updated Primary dose schedule, or queries regarding completion of the Primary Course where a first dose of Comirnaty® BA.4-5 has already been administered, should be directed to immunisation@hse.ie.

Vaccines & Ordering

- The COVID-19 vaccine which will be used for the spring campaign is Comirnaty® XBB.1.5.
- COVID-19 vaccines can be ordered online from <https://www.ordervaccines.ie/>. Fortnightly deliveries will continue as per your delivery calendar.
- As Comirnaty® XBB.1.5 can now be used for Primary course and booster dose vaccinations, there will be no further supply of Comirnaty® BA.4-5 issued from NCCS.
- Any expired vaccine stock should be returned to NCCS using the normal process – see <https://www.hse.ie/eng/health/immunisation/hcpinfo/vaccineordering/vaccreturn.pdf>

For any queries relating to vaccine orders or deliveries, please email NCCS customer services at: vaccines@udd.ie or phone 01 4637770.

Recording Vaccines

The PharmaVax system will be updated shortly to enable the recording of Comirnaty® XBB.1.5 for Primary courses and additional doses.

Please ensure the patient vaccination record is correct, take a moment to check the information entered into your PharmaVax System.

In particular:

- Check that you are recording the dose correctly as a primary course, additional dose or a booster dose.



COVID-19 Vaccination Training Programmes

Please ensure all staff involved in the COVID-19 vaccination programme have received appropriate training and are up to date with the current recommendations. Training programmes are available by logging into your account on www.hseland.ie. Vaccinators should complete the relevant modules on HSeLanD prior to the campaign commencing. COVID-19 Vaccination. Training modules are currently being updated to reflect the new guidance and will be available shortly.

All clinical guidance is available through the National Immunisation Office, and updated guidance materials will be available early next week. Please refer to [COVID-19 Vaccine Information for Health Professionals](#).

The Operational Guidance for COVID-19 Vaccination in Community Pharmacy is updated and is available on the [VPCC Webpage](#). Please see [VPCC Guidance Notes](#) for your use and reference in COVID-19 Vaccination Programme and in the management of specific scenarios in Primary Care.

I would like once again to express my sincere gratitude to Community Pharmacies and their teams for the efficient manner in which the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme has been delivered to date. I would also like to wish you and your team every success in delivering the spring booster vaccinations to your patients in the coming weeks.

Please be assured of the HSE's continued support at this time.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'G. Crowley', written over a horizontal line.

Geraldine Crowley
Assistant National Director
Enhanced Community Care Programme &
Primary Care Contract