



COVID-19 VACCINATION FOR HOUSEBOUND PERSONS (PHASE 7) GP and Other Stakeholder Communication

1) Scope and Context

It has been recognised previously within the national COVID-19 vaccination programme that a certain cohort of society are housebound or bedbound and so are unable to attend a vaccination clinic in the community. A home vaccination service has been provided for these individuals in two previous phases (for those aged 70 and over, and then for those aged 12 and over).

Phase 7 of vaccination for housebound children from 5 – 11 years will be managed by Mobile Community Vaccination Teams in each area.

On 25th November 2021 the European Medicines Agency (EMA) recommended granting extension of indication for the mRNA COVID-19 vaccine Comirnaty® (Pfizer BioNTech) to include children aged 5–11 years.

On the 08th December 2021 National Immunisation Advisory Committee (NIAC) published guidance on COVID-19 vaccination for children aged 5 to 11 years.

NIAC recommendations:

1. COVID-19 Vaccination is strongly recommended for those aged 5 to 11 years:
 - a. With underlying conditions.
 - b. Living with a younger child with complex medical needs.
 - c. Living with a person who is immunocompromised.
2. For Children aged 5 to 11 years, the recommended COVID-19 vaccine is Comirnaty® formulation for children aged 5-11 years (10 micrograms/dose). The dose schedule of Comirnaty® for this age group is 10 micrograms, two doses three weeks apart.
3. Children aged 5 to 11 years who are severely immunocompromised should be given a third dose of Comirnaty® at least 28 days after the second dose to complete the Primary series.
4. For Immunocompromised, – a hospital consultant notifies the CVC of the child’s status. This is being coordinated centrally with CHI who are submitting the details to City West VC who will then flag the patient records as being immunocompromised. (the Regional CHO Vaccination Team will be informed that the child is due an additional dose
5. Before vaccination, parents/legal guardian should be informed of the known benefits, risks and uncertainties of COVID-19 vaccination.
 - a. The decision to accept, defer or refuse vaccination for a child should be respected.
6. Every effort should be made to avoid any adverse impact from the COVID-19 vaccination programme for children aged 5 to 11 years on the routine primary childhood and school immunisation programmes.



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The full NIAC guidance is available at:

<https://rcpi-live-cdn.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/NIAC-Recommendations-on-COVID-19-vaccination-for-children-aged-5-to-11-years.pdf>.

Vaccine

To date the HSE Vaccination Programme uses Comirnaty® (Pfizer BioNTech) for adults, adolescents and children aged 12 years and above. The Comirnaty® vaccine authorised for children aged 5-11 years is a different formulation, it contains 10 micrograms per dose and is specifically for children of this age group. The dose contained in this vaccine is lower than that used in people aged 12 and above.

Diluted vials

The manufacturers advise that at the present time there is no data available regarding the stability of diluted 10mcg/dose (Children 5-11 years) vials during transportation. A diluted vaccine vial should not be transported for use between house visits (i.e. only 1 vial per house visit).

2) Referral of Children requiring a Home Vaccination

Definition of Housebound: A Child is housebound if they are unable to leave their home at all, or if they require significant assistance to leave the house due to illness, frailty, surgery, disability, mental ill health or nearing end of life. Children who are not able to attend their GP Practice, local retail Pharmacist, HSE COVID-19 Vaccination Centre (CVC) or acute hospital vaccination clinic for clinical reasons and for whom this difficulty with attendance cannot be resolved by providing transport may be referred to this pathway. Referrals will only be accepted once this criterion is met and verified by referring clinicians.

Children identified as meeting criteria for home vaccination: Children eligible for dose 1 and dose 2 and an additional dose vaccination in accordance with NIAC guidance who now meet the eligibility criteria for a home vaccination service can be referred by one of the following:

- General Practitioner.
- Nominated CHO lead for the CHO Primary Care Service.
- Nominated CHO lead for the CHO Disability Service.
- Nominated CHO lead for the CHO Mental Health Service.
- Nominated CHO lead for the CHO Older Persons Service



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3) How to submit a referral for Home Vaccination

All new referrals for home vaccination should be submitted to the HSE Home Vaccination Service in the CHO area in which the eligible person is resident. Referrals are made to the dedicated CHO email address (see Appendix 1) via the enclosed *Housebound REFERRAL FORM – Version Jan 2022* (Note: this form is applicable for any referral for housebound vaccinations).

4) Timelines for referral

New referrals for home vaccination for this cohort can commence from 24th Jan 2022 with expectation that new referrals for this phase to be submitted no later than early Feb 2022.

5) Timelines for vaccination

HSE Mobile Community Vaccination Teams will manage the vaccination of this cohort of patients. Home vaccination of this cohort is expected to commence from week commencing 24th January 2022 and be completed by the end of February 2022. (This timeframe will be extended for children requiring an additional dose).



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Appendix 1 – Email addresses for submission of new referrals for Housebound Vaccination

CHO	Email addresses for referrals	CHO counties
CHO 1	cho1housebound@healthmail.ie	Donegal, Sligo, Leitrim, Cavan and Monaghan
CHO 2	cho2housebound@healthmail.ie	Galway, Roscommon and Mayo
CHO 3	cho3housebound@healthmail.ie	Clare, Limerick, and North Tipperary
CHO 4	cho4housebound@healthmail.ie	Cork and Kerry
CHO 5	cho5housebound@healthmail.ie	South Tipperary, Carlow, Kilkenny, Waterford and Wexford
CHO 6	Cho6housebound@healthmail.ie	Wicklow, Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown and Dublin South East
CHO 7	Cho7housebound@healthmail.ie	Kildare, West Wicklow, Dublin West, Dublin South City, and Dublin South West
CHO 8	Cho8housebound@healthmail.ie	Laois, Offaly, Longford, Westmeath, Louth and Meath
CHO 9	Cho9housebound@healthmail.ie	Dublin North, Dublin North Central and Dublin North West