



1st October 2021

**Re: Additional COVID-19 vaccines for the immunocompromised
Information on influenza vaccines for each age group**

Dear Colleague,

Additional COVID-19 vaccines for the immunocompromised

I am writing to provide you with clinical information regarding those who are eligible for an additional dose of COVID-19 vaccine because they are immunocompromised.

The National Immunisation Advisory Committee (NIAC) have advised that patients with certain medical conditions and on some medications may not make a sufficient immune response to a primary course of COVID-19 vaccines and therefore require an additional dose to provide them with extra protection.

The majority of these patients will be under the care of a hospital clinician and therefore hospitals have been asked to identify these patients and refer them so they can be invited for vaccination in a CVC. This process has now commenced and is expected to take a number of weeks to complete. Patients are being asked to wait to receive an appointment if they are under hospital care.

There may be a minority of your patients who meet the criteria for requiring an additional dose of vaccine but are not under hospital care, for example those on systemic corticosteroids around the time of their primary course.

The level of corticosteroids is outlined below:

- Prednisolone more than 40 mg/day for more than 1 week in the 3 months prior to the first dose of vaccine
- Prednisolone 20mg/day or greater for 2 weeks or longer in the 3 months prior to the first dose of vaccine

Other corticosteroids taken in the 3 months prior to first or second dose of vaccine should be assessed in terms of equivalent prednisolone dose.

For more details on the conditions and treatments where an additional dose is required



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Primary Vaccination C

Double click the Adobe Acrobat icon:

Any of your patients who meet the criteria but are not under hospital care can be identified and vaccinated in general practice. If your practice is not providing COVID-19 vaccines, a referral pathway is also available.

Information and resources including leaflets for patients about the additional dose can be found here: <https://bit.ly/C193PD>



Influenza vaccine for different age groups

You will be aware that influenza vaccine is also available to order, and this season there are three vaccines available for different age groups.

- **QIV** (Quadrivalent Influenza Vaccine) for people in at risk groups like healthcare workers, people with long term medical conditions aged 6-23 months and 18-64 years and pregnant women
- **aQIV** (Fluad Tetra) for people aged 65 and older, and
- **LAIV** (Fluenz Tetra) for children aged 2 to 17 years including those with long term conditions

It is particularly important that all staff administering influenza vaccines are aware that Fluad Tetra must only be given to patients aged 65 years and over, it is not licensed for younger people.

We have produced a poster that can be printed and displayed as a reminder: <https://bit.ly/SumFlu21>.

Further information about the Influenza vaccination programme for the 2021/2022 season is available from www.hse.ie/flu.

Yours sincerely,

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