



Oifig an Straitéis Chúraim Phríomha agus an Phleanála Stiúrthóir Cúnta
Náisiúnta
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GP Guidance for 12- 15 year olds

Dear Doctor,

Introduction

This note is to assist GPs vaccinating 12-15 years old children and specifically address consent.

Please also note that the National Immunisation Office (NIO) is the primary source of clinical guidelines about national immunisation programmes, including COVID-19. Please refer to its website regularly, as the NIO monitor and update information in relation to vaccinations. Please see:

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/health/immunisation/hcpinfo/covid19vaccineinfo4hps/clinicalguidance.pdf>

Anaphylaxis

There is no need to have a different dose of adrenaline for 12-15 year olds. The anaphylaxis section of the immunisation guidelines has been updated to clarify that 12 years and over require 500-600micrograms. Available at:

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/health/immunisation/hcpinfo/guidelines/anaphylaxis.pdf>

Patient Vaccine Information

Separate deliveries will be received of leaflets and consent forms to support the 12-15 year old programme.

Consent

A new module on HSEland has been developed to provide advice and guidance on the process for gaining consent from parents and legal guardians of 12-15 year olds to support the programme. We recommend that any GP offering vaccine to this age group views this module on <https://lms.hseland.ie/> (search for Covid-19 Vaccine Training Programmes and complete the programme).

GPs must be aware of who can give consent to a young person aged 12-15 years: <https://www.hse.ie/eng/health/immunisation/hcpinfo/covid19vaccineinfo4hps/who-can-give-consent-for-young-people-aged-under-16.pdf>

An adult who is legally able to consent for the child will need to be present and provide consent for the child aged 12-15 at the time of the vaccination appointment. They should complete and sign the HSE consent form. A child cannot attend this appointment alone. The child should also be asked to assent to the vaccination which must be recorded on the consent form. A child who does not assent should not be restrained or vaccinated against their will.

A new leaflet, consent form, guidance on who can give consent, a frequently asked questions document and decision aid for parents to support them in the decision on whether to vaccinate their 12-15 year old are available on the HSE website <https://www.hse.ie/eng/health/immunisation/hcpinfo/covid19vaccineinfo4hps/prog1215/>. These materials, along with a consent form for 12-15 year olds will be circulated to GPs. This consent form should be completed and retained securely within the GP practice.

One Consenting and One Non-Consenting Parent/Guardian

The national vaccination programme has started the vaccination of 12-15 year old children. Consent for these children is provided by a parent / legal guardian. However, there will be occasions where one parent / legal guardian is non-consenting and the other parent / legal guardian is consenting.

Following review and legal advice, the National Consent Group have determined that the programme should take reasonable steps to avoid these children being vaccinated until the parents / legal guardians have reached agreement.

If a vaccinator is notified that one parent objects to vaccination, our guidance is that the vaccination should not be carried out even if the other parent has consented. If these circumstances arise, the advice is that the parents should discuss matters themselves and seek to reach agreement, including if appropriate discussion with the child's General Practitioner, and with their child, whose own views are important.

The policy also highlights the need for the child to assent to care, and therefore, vaccination will not proceed if any child does not agree to getting it on the day.

Appendix 1 – Patient Consent Checklist

When a patient aged 16 years and above attends their GP and is offered COVID-19 vaccination, the GP will use the following Consent Checklist to select the appropriate consent response. The response is then recorded on the patient's record on the GP Practice Management System.

One of these options is appropriate when establishing consent:

- Yes, I confirm this person has given me their consent to be vaccinated to protect against COVID-19. They have read and understood the vaccine information provided, including known side effects.

OR

- No, I confirm this person has informed me that they do NOT consent to be vaccinated to protect against COVID-19. They have read and understood the accompanying vaccine information, including risks of not vaccinating.

OR

- I confirm that this person cannot consent and they are being vaccinated against COVID-19 for their benefit and according to their will and preference, and the above is recorded in their healthcare record and includes information about any consultation that has taken place to help determine their will and preference.

For young people aged 12-15:

Parents should be supported to make the best choice for their child - there are patient information leaflets and a decision aid available to support this. There is a new consent form for vaccinating 12-15 year olds available on the NIO website too.

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/health/immunisation/hcpinfo/covid19vaccineinfo4hps/prog1215/>

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/health/immunisation/hcpinfo/covid19vaccineinfo4hps/prog1215/consentform.pdf>

Only the person who can legally give consent on behalf of the child can attend the appointment with them so they can give consent at the appointment. GPs will need to document the name of the person giving consent and their relationship to the child. The consent covers both doses unless consent is withdrawn by the parent/legal guardian.

Other important reminders:

- Only certain people can give consent for a child e.g. legal guardian. See this information on who can give consent for a child under 16 <https://www.hse.ie/eng/health/immunisation/hcpinfo/covid19vaccineinfo4hps/who-can-give-consent-for-young-people-aged-under-16.pdf>
- Remember to get assent from the child before vaccinating, and
- Undertake the HSE Land consent module in this age group available here-

<https://lms.hseland.ie/> (search for Covid-19 Vaccine Training Programmes and complete the programme).

Completing the Consent Form

The parent or guardian completes section 1. The parent or guardian must also complete and sign section 2 or 3.

The GP will then complete the information on page 4 "FOR OFFICE USE ONLY".

The completed consent form should be retained securely within the GP practice.

Appendix 2 – Guidance on Photographic ID

If possible, children aged 12 to 15 should bring a form of identification with their date of birth on it. This can be their passport or birth certificate.

If these are not available, any identification like a Public Services Card or school ID would be helpful also.

If 12 to 15 year olds do not have any identification, the adult who brings them to their appointment can confirm their identity and their age.

Yours sincerely,



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