

**Sent via email**  
To all GP practices

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19<sup>th</sup> March 2021

Dear colleagues

### **COVID-19 vaccine planning**

You will have seen media coverage about reduced AstraZeneca deliveries in upcoming weeks. Whilst we expect deliveries to continue through April, practices may not get a delivery every week.

We have written to you previously about prioritising holding sufficient doses of vaccine for those needing 2<sup>nd</sup> doses over the upcoming weeks. With vaccine supplies to be confirmed, we are asking that going forward practices should ensure that they have enough vaccine for all patients who will be due 2<sup>nd</sup> doses in the next 4 weeks, assuming a 10 week dose interval.

Do not cancel any patients already booked for a 1<sup>st</sup> dose of vaccine. You will however need to pause calling patients for 1<sup>st</sup> doses until you have built up the reserve for 2<sup>nd</sup> doses. Only when you have reserved sufficient vaccine for planned 2<sup>nd</sup> doses over the next 4 weeks should you begin calling patients for 1<sup>st</sup> doses.

Given recent significant deliveries we would expect most practices will have started 2<sup>nd</sup> doses and will have some vaccines reserved for 2<sup>nd</sup> doses. Allocations over the next few weeks should allow practices to build their reserves for 2<sup>nd</sup> doses. Practices may choose to leave some allocated vaccine in the distribution centre until they need it delivered, but do remember that any order can take up to 5 working days to be delivered.

If any practice does not have sufficient vaccines for 2<sup>nd</sup> doses at the 10 week interval within the next 2 weeks please let your PSM know. We will prioritise allocations to ensure 2<sup>nd</sup> doses can be administered.

### **Dose interval**

2<sup>nd</sup> doses should be planned for around 10 weeks after the 1<sup>st</sup> dose, except for the small number of patients needing a different interval on named patient request from their consultant.

For operational reasons such as holidays this can be increased to 11-12weeks.

To avoid wastage of recently delivered short expiry date vaccines, this can be reduced to 9 weeks.

### **Eligible groups**

Groups for GPs to vaccinate are listed in Annex A. Please note that practices should not be vaccinating patients aged less than 50 years, other than those eligible due to clinical conditions. If you are unable to use vaccines for eligible groups please do not order them from the distributors as they cannot be returned for redistribution.

Thank you for your continued efforts in this important programme.

Yours sincerely

*Directorate of Integrated Care*

PP Dr Margaret O'Brien  
Head of General Medical Services, HSCB

**COVID-19 Vaccination priority order for General Practice March 2021**

1. Patients 80 or over (DoB on or before 31 March 1941)  
**and** practice staff
  2. Patients 70 to 79 (DoB 1 April 1941 to 31 March 1951)  
**and** patients aged 18 to 64 who are Clinically Extremely Vulnerable.
  3. Patients aged 65 to 69\* (DoB 1 April 1951 to 31 March 1956)  
**and** patients aged 18 to 64 years in an at-risk group including carers.
  4. Patients aged 60 to 64 (DoB 1 April 1956 to 31 March 1961)
  5. Patients aged 55 to 59 (DoB 1 April 1961 to 31 March 1966)
  6. Patients aged 50 to 54 (DoB 1 April 1966 to 31 March 1971)
- Practices have not been asked to actively call patients aged 65-69 most of whom took up the option for booking at vaccination centres, but should offer vaccine on request.

