

**From the Chief Medical Officer
Prof Sir Michael McBride**



Department of
Health

An Roinn Sláinte

Mánnystrie O Poustie

www.health-ni.gov.uk

HSS(MD) 75/2021

FOR ACTION

Chief Executive, Public Health Agency and Health and Social Care Board/NIAS *for onward cascade as appropriate*

Assistant Director of General Medical Services, Health and Social Care Board *for onward cascade to All General Practitioners, GP Locums and Practice Staff OOHs Medical Managers*

Director of Pharmacy at the HSC Board *(for cascade to prescribing advisers and community pharmacies)*

PLEASE SEE ATTACHED FULL CIRCULATION LIST

Dear Colleague

PATIENTS REQUIRING ASTRAZENECA VACCINE AS A BOOSTER

1. Further to my letter of 24 September 2021, HSS(MD)69/2021, this letter seeks to provide further clarity on the pathway for those individuals who have been assessed as requiring the AstraZeneca vaccine for a booster for whatever reason.
2. The JCVI advises a preference for an mRNA vaccine as the booster dose, irrespective of which vaccine was given in the primary schedule. There is good evidence that these vaccines will provide a strong booster response and all patients should be strongly encouraged to receive an mRNA vaccine as their booster dose.
3. However, there will be cases where mRNA vaccines cannot be offered e.g. due to clinical contraindication, or may be refused, thereby leaving the patient without receiving any booster dose. In those cases the use of the AstraZeneca vaccine may be considered for persons aged 40 years or over.
4. If a GP or Trust clinician decides that their patient is unable/unwilling to receive a mRNA vaccine as their booster dose they should issue them with a letter advising that they can receive the AstraZeneca vaccine via a community

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pharmacy. The patient should then be advised to make their own vaccination arrangements with a community pharmacy providing the AstraZeneca vaccine. Details of participating community pharmacy stores can be found via the NI Direct page on the COVID-19 vaccination programme.

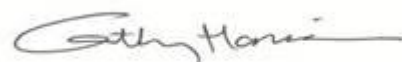
Yours sincerely



Prof Sir Michael McBride
Chief Medical Officer



Linda Kelly
Chief Nursing Officer



Mrs Cathy Harrison
Chief Pharmaceutical Officer

Circulation List

Director of Public Health/Medical Director, Public Health Agency (*for onward distribution to all relevant health protection staff*)
Director of Nursing, Public Health Agency
Directors of Pharmacy HSC Trusts
Director of Social Care and Children, HSCB
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Directors of Children's Services, HSC Trusts
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Medicines Management Pharmacists, HSC Board (*for cascade to prescribing advisers*)
Regional Medicines Information Service, Belfast HSC Trust
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Joe Brogan, Assistant Director of Integrated Care, HSCB
Michael Donaldson, Head of Dental Services, HSCB (*for distribution to all General Dental Practitioners*)
Raymond Curran, Head of Ophthalmic Services, HSCB (*for distribution to Community Optometrists*)
Trade Union Side
Clinical Advisory Team
Louise McMahon, Director of Integrated Care, HSCB

This letter is available on the Department of Health website at
<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/topics/professional-medical-and-environmental-health-advice/hssmd-letters-and-urgent-communications>