

Important - Minimisation of Vaccine Wastage

The PHA have asked all service providers to minimise wastage of vaccine doses when planning for the Autumn 25 programme.

As the risk profile of COVID-19 has changed, there is a need to review the current delivery of vaccinations through community pharmacy. We now have very high levels of population immunity against the SARS-CoV-2 virus and the newer Omicron sub-variants are not associated with increased disease severity compared with earlier variants. There is therefore not the same urgency to immediately vaccinate an individual when they can be accommodated at a routine or planned appointment.

The costs associated with the wastage from multidose vials is considerable if appointments are not managed efficiently.

Providers should aim to adhere to the following steps when delivering the COVID-19 vaccination programme:

- **Cluster vaccination appointments - e.g. group vaccinations on one day of the week**
Aim to cluster appointments e.g. by organising vaccination clinics on a single day of the week or operating a waiting list to group appointments. Advise patients that appointments will be clustered together due to the use of the multi dose vials.
We acknowledge that the organisation of clinics may be more difficult in rural areas or if demand is low, in these circumstances the operation of a waiting list may be more suitable.
- **Only give single vaccinations from multidose vials - in exceptional circumstances**
Ad hoc vaccinations where only one dose from the 6 dose vial is used should now only occur in exceptional circumstances.
- **Consider demand before placing orders - Comirnaty (1 box = 10vials = 60 doses)**
Orders for vaccine should not exceed the quantity required to cover **2 weeks activity**. Providers should order low quantities frequently rather than placing a large single order.
- **Only place an order once you have confirmed demand** – especially at the start of the campaign. Please do not order simply because you have contracted to provide the service.