

**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

Castle Buildings
Stormont Estate
BELFAST
BT4 3SQ

Tel: 028 9052 0563

Email: Michael.McBride@health-ni.gov.uk

Our Ref: HSS(MD) 75/2021

Date: 14 November 2021

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.

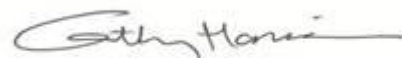
Yours sincerely



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
Family Practitioner Service Leads, Health and Social Care Board (*for cascade to GP Out of Hours services*)
Medical Directors, HSC Trusts (*for onward distribution to all Consultants, Occupational Health Physicians and School Medical Leads*)
Nursing Directors, HSC Trusts (*for onward distribution to all Community Nurses, and Midwives*)
Directors of Children's Services, HSC Trusts
RQIA (*for onward transmission to all independent providers including independent hospitals*)
Medicines Management Pharmacists, HSC Board (*for cascade to prescribing advisers*)
Regional Medicines Information Service, Belfast HSC Trust
Regional Pharmaceutical Procurement Service, Northern HSC Trust
Professor Donna Fitzsimons, Head of School of Nursing and Midwifery QUB
Professor Sonja McIlpatrick, Head of School of Nursing, University of Ulster
Heather Finlay, CEC
Donna Gallagher, Open University
Professor Paul McCarron, Head of School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, UU
Professor Colin McCoy, Head of School, School of Pharmacy, QUB
Professor Colin Adair, Postgraduate Pharmacy Dean, NI Centre for Pharmacy Learning and Development, QUB
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 McMahan, 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>