



Oifig an Stiúirthóra Cúnta Náisiúnta
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Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
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COVID-19 Booster Vaccination Campaign Spring 2024

Dear Pharmacist,

NIAC have recommended a COVID-19 Spring booster for the following cohorts:

- those aged 80 years and older.
- those living in long-term care facilities for older adults.
- those aged 5 years and older with immunocompromise associated with a suboptimal response to vaccination.

NIAC also recommend that the Spring booster should be made available for those aged 70-79 years who, following discussion with a healthcare provider, request vaccination.

In addition, pregnant women, in the appropriate stage of pregnancy and where the appropriate time since last dose of vaccine has elapsed, remain eligible for booster doses throughout the year.

The most recent NIAC recommendations are available [here](#).

The HSE are currently working to operationalise these recommendations; further information on dates for the Spring campaign will be communicated as soon as it is available, but it is anticipated the programme will commence in mid to late April.

Those aged 12 years and over who are eligible will be able to avail of booster doses through participating GPs and Pharmacies. As in previous campaigns, HSE mobile vaccination teams will provide vaccinations to eligible patients who live in long-term care facilities for older adults, those aged under 12 years, and the housebound.

The COVID-19 vaccine remains free of charge to those eligible cohorts outlined, and is not available privately.

The National Immunisation Office are currently working to update the clinical guidance and this will be available shortly. Please refer to NIO bulletins and web content at:

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

For any clinical queries please contact immunisation@hse.ie.

The COVID-19 vaccine which will be used is Comirnaty® XBB.1.5 and will be available to order from NCCS at <https://www.ordervaccines.ie/> as per your normal online calendar. The vaccine delivery schedule will continue as a fortnightly cycle throughout the spring campaign. With this in mind, we recommend that you wait until the spring campaign dates are finalised before ordering vaccines, and then to only order the quantity that you expect to use before the next fortnightly delivery. This will assist us in managing vaccination stocks over the course of the campaign and minimise the amount of stock which will expire without being utilised.



The existing fee rates will be paid to Community Pharmacies involved in the delivery of the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme. The Primary Care Reimbursement Service (PCRS) will receive, process, and integrate electronic COVID-19 vaccination payment claims from HSE PharmaVax to ensure that Community Pharmacists are paid promptly for services provided as per Operational Guidance.

It is important that only pharmacies providing spring vaccination services are listed on the [Pharmacy Finder](#), to support the public in finding a local pharmacy where they can access vaccination. If you are not in position to participate in the upcoming spring campaign, we request that you would temporarily suspend your details from display until you will be rejoining for subsequent campaigns. Please ensure your details are up to date and amend as necessary using the [Pharmacy Service Listing form](#).

We will provide a further update as soon as dates for the COVID-19 Spring Booster Campaign are finalised.

Conclusion

I would like once again to express my sincere gratitude to Community Pharmacies and their teams for the efficient manner in which the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme has been delivered to date. I would also like to wish you and your team every success in preparing for the Spring Booster Campaign over the coming weeks.

Please be assured of the HSE's continued support at this time.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'G. Crowley', written over a horizontal line.

Geraldine Crowley
Assistant National Director
Enhanced Community Care Programme &
Primary Care Contract