



Media Release

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Single dose of COVID-19 vaccine to be offered to 12-15 year olds

12 to 15 years old will be offered a single dose of a COVID-19 vaccine on a voluntary basis, after the Committee for Health & Social Care considered the health and wider social benefits to this cohort.

The Committee's decision to offer the vaccine to this age group is in line with decisions already made in the UK and other Crown Dependencies.

The Committee considered a range of advice on this issue, including from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation. The JCVI concluded that whilst there was an overall advantage for vaccination in this cohort, it did not meet their usual threshold for recommending population based vaccination solely on health grounds. The JCVI did not feel the risk of vaccination in this cohort was greater than the benefit.

In addition, the MHRA concluded that the Pfizer vaccine was safe for use within this age cohort in June, prior to the JCVI making their population-based recommendations.

The four Chief Medical Officers of the Devolved Administrations considered the social benefits of vaccinating this cohort, including a reduction in the disruption to the education of young people, in addition to the marginal health benefits, to reach the decision to recommend offering the vaccine to those aged 12 to 15.

Invitations will be sent in due course and we ask that individuals do not contact us to book appointments prior to receiving a letter.

The letters will include information to help families discuss the vaccine offer with the eligible young people within their household. These doses will be administered through the Community Vaccination Centre using bespoke clinics.

12 to 15 year olds will be offered one dose of vaccine, in line with what has been offered to 16 to 17 year olds.

However, two doses of vaccine continue to be offered to 12 to 15 year olds with underlying health conditions. Letters have already been distributed to those young people in this cohort after discussions with paediatricians and specialist nursing teams.

Deputy Al Brouard, President of the Committee for Health & Social Care, said:

‘Our Committee considered a range of advice before making this decision, including guidance from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation and our own Public Health experts. The vaccination of young people on a voluntary basis requires careful consideration and our Committee has done that. The expert advice is that there are health and social benefits to offering the vaccine to this cohort. Our decision also aligns us with the UK and other Crown Dependencies. When the invitation letters go, they will contain relevant information to help support the discussions that will take place between many parents and their children about whether they wish to take up the vaccine offer. This is very important as we want to support the decision-making process for children, young people and their parents in an open and transparent manner. And I repeat that the vaccine programme is voluntary.’