



## Media Release

**Date: 28 October 2021**

### COVID-19 Vaccination Programme Update

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The Bailiwick Vaccination Programme has now administered over 110,00 doses of vaccine in the Bailiwick. Nearly 6,500 booster doses have been given.

#### **Who is eligible for a booster vaccine?**

Islanders aged 50 years and over, health and social care workers and younger people at risk are being offered a booster dose of the COVID-19 vaccine.

Individuals have been invited in priority group order, from priority group 1 down to priority group 9, and this will continue throughout the booster programme. The Vaccination Team will contact eligible people when it is their turn to have a booster.

The booster programme is currently delivering booster vaccinations to the following groups:

- those living in residential or nursing care homes for older adults
- all adults aged 50 years or over
- frontline health and social care workers
- all those aged 16 to 49 years with underlying health conditions that put them at higher risk of severe COVID-19 and adult carers
- adult household contacts (aged 16 or over) of immunosuppressed individuals

#### **Status of the Booster Programme:**

We are now firmly in the booster phase of the Vaccination Programme with very few individuals coming forward for first or second primary doses of vaccine. The booster programme is on track to complete this phase of the programme by the end of the year.

However, the offer to receive a free vaccine remains in place for any islander aged 12 or over. Even if someone has declined the initial vaccine offer, they are welcome to join the programme now. We would encourage islanders who have not yet had either of their first 2 doses of the vaccine to have these as soon as possible.

Individuals do not need to contact the Vaccine Contact Centre once 6 months has elapsed. Invitations will be sent out in priority and in batches to manage the flow of patients into the Community Vaccination Centre – this will consider the availability of vaccinators. Whilst we have a number of volunteers who will soon be joining the Programme as vaccinators, this week in particular has seen a lower number of vaccinators available due to the half-term holiday.

The majority of adults living in residential or nursing care have now been offered a COVID-19 booster along with health and social care workers.

Invitations are currently being sent out in batches to those adults over the age of 16 who have underlying health conditions that put them at higher risk of severe COVID-19. This will include those who meet the criteria set out for shielding in the early phase of the pandemic and those who are classed as moderately high risk.

#### **COVID-19 Immunity:**

The booster programme is being offered, in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI). Individuals are being offered a booster provided that 6 months has passed since the date of their final primary dose of vaccine (**Dose 2** if you were initially given a course of AstraZeneca, Pfizer BioNTech or Moderna - **Dose 1** if you were initially vaccinated with Janssen).

We are offering a booster programme in line with the recommendations of JCVI. This is because, like for some other vaccines, levels of protection afforded by the primary COVID-19 vaccination programme may begin to wane over time. This booster dose will help extend the protection a person has gained from their first 2 doses to give them longer term protection. Importantly it is thought that the booster vaccine will help to reduce the risk of islanders needing admission to the PEH hospital due to COVID-19 infection this winter.

JCVI advises that the booster vaccine dose is offered no earlier than 6 months after completion of the primary vaccine course. However, this doesn't mean that you are 'no longer vaccinated' as soon as 6 months has elapsed. Protection against severe disease from the first 2 doses seems to decline very slowly. So, there is no cause for concern if the booster vaccine is given a few weeks after the 6 month time-point. The booster dose should help to extend a person's protection into the next year.

As more time elapses, more data on the duration of protection provided from an initial (primary) course of vaccine will become available which will determine the booster requirements for individuals over the coming months/years.