

# JCVI advice on COVID-19 booster vaccines for those aged 18 to 39 and a second dose for ages 12 to 15

Press release

Following the emergence of the Omicron variant, including confirmed cases in the UK, JCVI has urgently reviewed vaccine response measures.



The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) previously advised that those aged over 40 years and those at higher risk from coronavirus (COVID-19) should be offered a booster. This new JCVI advice means those aged 18 to 39 will also be eligible for a booster when the NHS calls them forward.

The booster will be offered in order of descending age groups, with priority given to the vaccination of older adults and those in a COVID-19 at-risk group. In response to the changing risk posed by the Omicron variant, the booster will now be given no sooner than 3 months after the primary course.

In addition, a second dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine (30 microgram) for young people aged 12 to 15 years is advised no sooner than 12 weeks after the first dose.

The overall intention of the measures advised above is to accelerate the deployment of COVID-19 vaccines and raise levels of protection across the population.

Professor Wei Shen Lim, Chair, COVID-19 immunisation, JCVI said:

Having a booster dose of the vaccine will help to increase our level of protection against the Omicron variant. This is an important way for us to reduce the impact of this variant on our lives, especially in the coming months.

If you are eligible for a booster, please take up the offer and keep yourself protected as we head into winter.

Both the Moderna (50 microgram) and Pfizer-BioNTech (30 microgram) vaccines have been shown to substantially increase antibody levels when offered as a booster dose and should be used with equal preference in the COVID-19 booster programme.

Continued efforts will be made to offer COVID-19 vaccination (first, second and booster doses) to adults who have yet to receive any COVID-19 vaccinations.

JCVI will continue to review the programme and consider further evidence to ensure that health benefits are maximised alongside the rapidly evolving data on the Omicron variant.

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## **HMRC customers with Post Office card accounts given extra time to switch accounts**

Customers who currently receive HMRC benefit payments into a Post Office card account will be given extra time to switch their account, HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) has confirmed.

HMRC recognises the vital financial support tax credits, Child Benefit and Guardian's Allowance can provide to individuals and families; and wants to give them every opportunity possible to receive the benefits to which they are entitled.

The department has arranged a one-off extension to the contract with the Post Office allowing customers until 5 April 2022 to provide alternative account details to HMRC. This means that the 13,000 customers, who are still to notify HMRC, will temporarily be able to continue to receive their payments into their Post Office account, giving them extra time to set up new accounts and notify the department.

HMRC is still encouraging those benefitting from the extension to switch their account at the earliest opportunity. Around 137,000 customers have already provided updated bank account details.

Customers can choose to receive their benefit payments to a bank, building society or credit union account. If they already have an alternative account, they can contact HMRC now to update their details.

Child Benefit and Guardian's Allowance customers can use their Personal Tax

Account to provide revised account details, [change their bank account details via GOV.UK](#) or by contacting the Child Benefit helpline on 0300 200 3100. Tax credits customers can [change their bank account details](#) by contacting the tax credits helpline on 0345 300 3900. If customers cannot open a bank account, they should contact HMRC.

The Money Helper website, provided by the Money Advice and Pensions Service, offers information and advice about [how to choose the right current account](#) and [how to open an account](#).

HMRC has been contacting customers recently to encourage them to take action and will continue to contact them to remind them.

HMRC urges everyone to be alert if they are contacted out of the blue by someone asking for money or personal information. Customers should always type in the full online address [www.gov.uk/hmrc](http://www.gov.uk/hmrc) to access the correct HMRC contact information. HMRC sees high numbers of fraudsters emailing, calling or texting people claiming to be from the department. If in doubt, HMRC advises not to reply directly to anything suspicious, but to contact them straight away and to [search GOV.UK for 'HMRC scams'](#).

The agreement enabling HMRC to make payments into Post Office card accounts was due to end on 30 November 2021.

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## [UK signs series of international digital agreements at first Future Tech Forum](#)

- UK and Singapore sign deals to speed up trade, on digital identity and on cyber security
- Comes as UK also endorses Prague Proposals on telecommunications supplier diversity

A series of agreements have been signed during the first Future Tech Forum in London to help create new digital trade opportunities, remove barriers to cross-border trade and reduce costs for businesses.

Three Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) were signed by UK Digital Secretary Nadine Dorries and her Singaporean counterpart, Minister for Communications and Information Josephine Teo.

The agreements will underpin the UK-Singapore Digital Economy Agreement (DEA), currently being negotiated, which seeks to enhance the trade relationship and boost digital trade for businesses and benefits for consumers.

An agreement on 'digital trade facilitation' aims to reduce barriers to digitally led trade by encouraging businesses to use electronic invoicing. It will establish a pilot project for the transfer of electronic bills of lading – the main commercial document of the shipment of goods – between the UK and Singapore.

By removing expensive and antiquated paper record keeping, the move will not only help reduce costs for businesses and help drive more competitive pricing for consumers, but it will also reduce the carbon footprint of trade.

A further agreement marks an important step in achieving the smooth operation of digital identity systems between different jurisdictions. It will help reduce barriers in cross-border trade and enable businesses and individuals to use the international digital economy with more confidence and security.

An agreement on cyber security acknowledges the common interest between the UK and Singapore in addressing the international challenges of protecting the countries' interests online, and a shared vision of maintaining the economic and social benefits of a free, open, peaceful and secure cyberspace.

Digital Secretary Nadine Dorries said:

The Future Tech Forum is bringing global leaders together to discuss how we can use tech to create a greener, healthier and safer world.

The deals signed today will reduce costs for businesses and make it easier for our thriving impact startups to trade internationally and create wealth and jobs across the country.

It has been a pleasure hosting the UK's G7 Presidency and working together we will continue to create a more productive and resilient global economy with digital technology at its heart.

The Future Tech Forum marks the end of the UK's G7 Digital and Tech Presidency, its work on the 'digital and tech track', and builds on the G7 digital and technology ministers' declaration signed in April, which identified six priorities to recover from the pandemic and create a more productive and resilient global economy with digital technology at its heart.

The UK will tomorrow (Tuesday 30 November) issue a joint G7 presidency statement highlighting the progress in the digital field made through collaboration with members and partners. This includes reforming domestic legislation for the uptake of electronic transferable records, securing more resilient and secure supply chains, increasing collaboration on data sharing to benefit consumers, encouraging competition in digital markets and improving internet safety. The UK now hands the presidency to Germany.

The UK also today confirms it will endorse the Prague Proposals on telecommunications supplier diversity, which will guide international efforts to advance and promote diversity in the telecoms supply chain so countries

are not left dependent on a small number of operators to build their networks.

The proposals highlight the importance of working together to achieve open and interoperable networks where companies can mix and match equipment and components from a variety of vendors to boost security and drive competition and innovation in the telecoms supply chain. UK work in this area already includes research and development and trials through the £250 million [Diversification Strategy](#).

**ENDS**

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ENDS

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## Online training for veterinary Wholesale Qualified Persons (WQPs)

News story

Details of an online training course for veterinary Wholesale Qualified Persons (WQPs).



The VMD is planning to run an online training course in February 2022 for veterinary Wholesale Qualified Persons (WQPs).

The online training is split into 2 parts, and will run as follows:

- Part 1: Tuesday 8 February from 9.30-13.00
- Part 2: Wednesday 9 February from 9.30-13.00

This course is suited to persons who are seeking to become a WQP, existing WQPs wishing to refresh their understanding and for businesses looking to become wholesale dealers of veterinary medicines.

It will cover topics such as:

- the Veterinary Medicines Regulations and Good Distribution Practice guidelines
- quality management systems
- establishment of temperature monitoring systems
- record keeping requirements, including product traceability
- effective self-inspections and dealing with non-conformances
- training of staff
- validation of suppliers and customers
- handling product recalls

The cost of the training is £395. To purchase a place on the course, please complete the [booking form](#).

For further information please contact the VMD Training Team at:  
[training@vmd.gov.uk](mailto:training@vmd.gov.uk)

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