

# Guidance updated to allow flexibility in booster programme for most vulnerable

- Flexibility means programme will protect the most vulnerable more quickly
- Guidance clarification comes as the UK hits seven million boosters administered

COVID-19 booster vaccines can now be given sooner than six months after their second dose to certain vulnerable people where this makes operational sense, as the UKHSA's Green Book has been updated.

It will for example allow care home residents who may have received their second doses at different times to be vaccinated in the same session, as long as it's been five months since their second dose. It may also help with other vulnerable groups, such as housebound patients, so that they can have their flu and COVID-19 vaccines at the same time.

The flexibility in clinical guidance will speed up the administration of life-saving booster jabs, making it more efficient to reach the country's most vulnerable, helping to ensure they're protected over the coming winter months.

Also under this guidance, people who are eligible for a booster and are about to receive immunosuppressive treatment which would hinder their immune system will be able to get their booster from a minimum of four months after their second dose. This will ensure they can time their booster for when their immune system is best able to respond.

This is the practical approach to vaccination that has made the programme successful so far.

Health and Social Care Secretary Sajid Javid said:

We are making great progress with the booster rollout and I want to thank everyone working so hard to get jabs in arms.

This updated guidance will ensure healthcare professionals have the necessary flexibility in the booster programme, allowing more vulnerable people to be vaccinated where it makes operational sense to do so – including our loved ones in care homes.

The UKHSA's Green Book contains the latest information on vaccines and vaccination procedures in the UK for healthcare professionals.

Those the guidance applies to will not need to take additional steps.

People outside of these specific circumstances will continue to be invited for the COVID-19 booster jab when it's their turn, six months after their second dose – if they have not been contacted within a week of reaching six months since their second jab they can head online via NHS.UK to book their jab. People who cannot go online can call 119 too.

The independent Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) has advised that those most at risk to the virus receive their booster six months after their second dose, based on the available evidence. The government accepted this advice earlier this year. This advice has not changed and the JCVI keeps its advice under continuous review, using the latest data available.

Vaccines give high levels of protection but immunity reduces over time, particularly for older adults and at-risk groups, so it is vital that vulnerable people come forward to get their COVID-19 booster vaccine to top-up their defences and protect themselves this winter.

The latest evidence from SAGE shows that protection against symptomatic disease falls from 65%, up to 3 months after the second dose, to 45% six months after the second dose for the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine, and from 90% to 65% for the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine. Protection against hospitalisation falls from 95% to 75% for Oxford/AstraZeneca and 99% to 90% for Pfizer/BioNTech.

Although the vaccine efficacy against severe disease remains high, it should be noted that a small change can generate a major shift in hospital admissions (e.g. a change from 95% to 90% against hospitalisation would lead to doubling of admissions in those vaccinated).

The booster programme is designed to top up this waning immunity. Early results from Pfizer show that a booster following a primary schedule of the same vaccine restores protection back up to 95.6% against symptomatic infection.

The news comes as the UK hits over seven million booster jabs, after a record breaking week of more than two million being administered in the last seven days alone.

A total of 7,293,638 people have received their booster jab in the UK. 45,651,222 people have received two doses (79.4%) and 49,882,904 people have received one dose (86.7%).

Vaccines Minister Maggie Throup said:

COVID-19 booster vaccinations are extremely important in keeping people and their loved ones safe this winter, and this updated guidance will ensure the programme can adapt to best protect certain groups.

I encourage everyone eligible for their job to book theirs as soon as possible and secure this protection.

Vaccine confidence is high with data from the Office for National Statistics showing nearly all (94%) of those aged 50 to 69 say they would be likely to get their COVID-19 booster if offered, with the figure rising to 98% for those over 70.

Flu is another winter virus. To give people the best protection over winter, those eligible for a free flu vaccine should come forward and book an appointment at either their GP practice or their local pharmacy, or take it up when offered by their employer or other healthcare provider.

There are more than 500 extra vaccination sites now compared to April this year, with 1,697 vaccination centres in operation in April 2021, and over 2,200 vaccination centres in operation now.

Vaccines are also available for those aged 12-15 to offer the best possible protection this winter in schools, as well as over 100 vaccine centres.

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## [Over seven million people in the UK receive COVID-19 booster jabs](#)

Over seven million of the UK's most vulnerable people have now received their COVID-19 booster jab, the latest figures show today (Friday 29 October 2021).

The new milestone follows a record-breaking week of booster jabs being administered, with more than two million in the last seven days alone.

More than half of over 50s eligible for a booster in England have now also taken up the offer, ensuring the protection they've secured from their first two doses is maintained over the winter months.

A total of 7,293,638 people have received their booster jab in the UK. 45,651,222 people have received two doses (79.4%) and 49,882,904 people have received one dose (86.7%).

Health and Social Care Secretary Sajid Javid said:

Our life-saving booster vaccines are ensuring millions are protected over the winter – and it's fantastic that more than seven million people have now received their third jab.

This is a national mission and with over two million bookings in just one week, our booster programme is accelerating as more and more people become eligible. My thanks goes to the brilliant NHS staff and volunteers who are behind this huge effort to build our wall of defence.

I urge everyone eligible to get their booster as soon as they can – and you can now book online or ring 119 once it's been six months and one week since your second dose.

The colder weather traditionally leads to increased transmission of viruses and will be challenging for the NHS.

Vaccines give high levels of protection but immunity reduces over time, particularly for older adults and at-risk groups, so it is vital that vulnerable people come forward to get their COVID-19 booster vaccine to top-up their defences and protect themselves this winter.

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Although the vaccine efficacy against severe disease remains high, it should be noted that a small change can generate a major shift in hospital admissions (e.g. a change from 95% to 90% against hospitalisation would lead to doubling of admissions in those vaccinated).

The booster programme is designed to top up this waning immunity. Early results from Pfizer show that a booster following a primary schedule of the same vaccine restores protection back up to 95.6% against symptomatic infection.

Vaccine confidence is high with data from the Office for National Statistics showing nearly all (94%) of those aged 50 to 69 say they would be likely to get their COVID-19 booster if offered, with the figure rising to 98% for those over 70.

People will be invited for the COVID-19 booster jab when it's their turn – if they have not been contacted within a week of reaching six months since their second jab they can call 119 or book online.

Flu is another winter virus that can be serious. To give people the best protection over winter, those eligible for a free flu vaccine should come forward and book an appointment at either their GP practice or their local pharmacy, or take it up when offered by their employer or other healthcare provider.

Vaccines Minister Maggie Throup said:

It is excellent to see over seven million people have now had a booster, which are protecting the most vulnerable this winter.

Vaccines are vital over the colder months as viruses spread more easily from person to person, so if you're eligible for a booster jab or you're yet to come forward for your first or second jab, make sure to book it as soon as possible to protect yourself and those around you.

Last week, the government launched a nationwide advertising campaign, encouraging people to get their booster and flu jabs to protect themselves and their loved ones and help reduce pressures on the NHS. This includes outdoor billboards, broadcast and community radio and TV.

TV adverts asking people to "get vaccinated, get boosted, get protected" have aired this week at primetime spots, including during the Great British Bake Off, a Premier League football match and soaps such as Emmerdale and Coronation Street.

The offer of a first and second COVID-19 vaccine remains open to anyone who is eligible. Vaccines are available free of charge and from thousands of vaccine centres, GP practices and pharmacies. Around 98% of people live within 10 miles of a vaccination centre in England and vaccinations are taking place at sites including mosques, community centres and football stadiums.

There are more than 500 extra vaccination sites now compared to April this year, with 1,697 vaccination centres in operation in April 2021, and over 2,200 vaccination centres in operation now.

Vaccines are also available for those aged 12-15 to offer the best possible protection this winter in schools, as well as over 100 vaccine centres.

Dr Nikki Kanani, deputy lead for the NHS vaccination programme, said:

Booster vaccines are by far our best protection against the virus as we head into winter and it is fantastic to see enthusiasm continue to grow as more people become eligible, with millions of life-saving top-ups delivered across England already.

It is testament to the hard work of NHS staff and volunteers that only six weeks into the NHS vaccine programme, half of eligible over 50s and almost two-thirds of eligible over 80s have already received their booster vaccination. I had my booster at my local pharmacy and I would urge anyone, as soon as they can, to come

forward and book their all-important protection.

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## [Autumn Budget 2021](#)

News story

A GAD technical bulletin has been published.



In the latest [Technical Bulletin](#), we look at the implications of this week's Autumn Budget and Spending Review. The bulletin focuses on areas in which GAD advises, such as pensions and savings. The Chancellor also announced a reduction in the Universal Credit taper as part of a plan to build “a society that rewards work.”

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## [Robin Simcox's interim term as commissioner extended](#)

News story

The Interim Commissioner for Countering Extremism's appointment has been extended until March 2022.



He will now build upon the work of the last 6 months, which has included providing advice on the future structure and function of the commission, raising awareness around extremism in all its forms across the public sector, and considering how best public bodies can be supported in their efforts to disrupt those who seek to sow division in our communities.

Robin Simcox said:

My time as Interim Commissioner for Countering Extremism so far has only served to reinforce my belief that a robust governmental response to extremism is necessary. I have been very heartened to see such Ministerial enthusiasm for the role of the commission in helping to shape this response, and such willingness across government to harness the commission's expertise.

Ahead of the appointment of a permanent commissioner, which will take place in due course, the next 6 months will see a focus on rapidly building up the commission's capacity to provide best-in-class independent advice and expertise to government.

A campaign will commence shortly to recruit a permanent lead commissioner, details of which will be made available on the [Cabinet Office Public Appointments website](#).

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## [Marks and Spencer secures second surveillance camera certification](#)

Marks and Spencer Plc was the first retailer to be awarded with the Biometrics and Surveillance Camera Commissioner's third party certification mark over 5 years ago, and has now recently been re-certified for another 5

years.

## **Third party certification**

Third party certification, set up in 2016 by the previous Surveillance Camera Commissioner, enables any organisation within the public or private sector to demonstrate that they are using their surveillance camera system in line with the 12 guiding principles in the Surveillance Camera Code of Practice.

An organisation will decide if they would like either step 1 (desktop) or step 2 (full) certification.

Desktop certification lasts for one year, with the assumption that the organisation will apply for full certification at the end of it.

Full certification lasts for 5 years, after successful completion of an on-site audit with one of our three UKAS accredited certification bodies and includes an annual review each year to ensure continued compliance.

## **Why their re-certification matters to us**

Our office was delighted that Marks and Spencer had achieved certification, as they were the first retailer to do so. Consequently, we are extremely happy that they have now taken the decision to go through the process for the second time.

This shows their commitment to using their CCTV system in best practice in line with the principles of the code, which in turn allows them to demonstrate to their giant customer base that they are using CCTV in an effective, proportionate and transparent way.

In addition to this, the fact that they have decided to re-certify for the next 5 years clearly shows that the organisation believes certification is worthwhile and has benefitted them. This is extremely encouraging, and we hope it will lead the way for other retailers and other organisations from every sector to do the same.

## **What the Commissioner has to say**

The Commissioner, Professor Frasier Sampson, said:

I was over the moon to hear that Marks and Spencer had decided to take the decision to re-certify with the third party certification scheme. As a trusted retailer that has become, not just a high street name within the UK, but almost a part of the family this is a great way for a commercial company to show that they value the standards in the code.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for their leadership in responsible surveillance at a time when the public's trust and confidence in the principles set out in the code has



never been more important – and also congratulate them on their hard work to get this achievement.

## **What Marks and Spencer has to say**

Stephen Halpin, Operational Security Manager said:

Our customers are at the heart of everything we do. Certification that our CCTV operation is compliant to the 12 guiding principles of the CCTV Code of Practice supports us to maintain high CCTV standards for our customers safety and security. Re certification to the code and independent yearly auditing of our CCTV operation helps us to continue to do so.

Embracing the code means certification is achievable to all organisations of any size and will support them to maintain efficient and transparent CCTV standards for the benefit of their customers, especially retailers. Achieving certification was also a key consideration of our approach to CCTV in the delivery of our industry award winning CCTV Security Operations Centre, and we highly recommended certification to all organisations.