

Scottish Government submission of 8 January 2023

PE2072/A: Offer covid-19 vaccine boosters to teachers and school staff

The Scottish Government's decision-making throughout all COVID-19 vaccination programmes has been guided by the independent, expert clinical advice of the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI)

The JCVI is an independent expert advisory committee that advises United Kingdom government health departments in the four UK nations on immunisations and the prevention of infectious disease. The JCVI has the responsibility to provide high quality and considered advice and recommendations to the UK Health Ministers following thorough risk and benefit analysis. They consider vaccine safety, efficacy and look at the impact and cost effectiveness of immunisation strategies.

On 8 August 2023 the JCVI issued [advice](#) that a COVID-19 winter vaccine should be offered to the following groups:

- residents in care homes for older adults
- all adults aged 65 years and over
- persons aged 6 months to 64 years in a clinical risk group, as defined in tables 3 and 4 of the [COVID-19 chapter of the Green book](#)
- frontline health and social care workers
- persons aged 12 to 64 years who are household contacts, as defined in the Green book, of people with immunosuppression
- persons aged 16 to 64 years who are carers, as defined in the Green book, and staff working in care homes for older adults

The primary aim of Scotland's COVID-19 vaccination programme continues to be the prevention of severe illness, hospitalisations and deaths arising from the virus, in those most vulnerable due to age and clinical condition. It is also the case that population immunity to COVID-19 continues to increase with many people having 'hybrid immunity' acquired through a combination of previous vaccination and recovery from natural infection.

We understand the concern around transmission of COVID-19 in school settings, but it is important to note that whilst available COVID-19 vaccines are highly effective at protecting vaccinated individuals from severe COVID-19 related disease and death for many months, protection against symptomatic infection alone is less durable and protection against transmission of infection from one person to another is limited.

In conclusion, at this time the JCVI have not advised that teachers and school staff be offered a winter vaccine and the Scottish Government continues to be guided by their advice on COVID-19 vaccine deployment. There are therefore no plans to make COVID-19 vaccination available to groups not covered by JCVI advice this winter.