

Dear Vaccinator

### **Re: Avoiding Covid-19 Vaccine Wastage**

Both Pfizer and AstraZeneca (AZ) Covid-19 vaccines have an overage included in each vial. Whilst not suitable for planning stock volumes for a clinic, this does mean that for many Pfizer vaccines it is possible to get a full 6th dose from a vial and for AZ an 11th or even 12th dose from a vial.

Each vaccine has a limited life at room temperature with the diluted Pfizer vaccine being particularly challenging as it cannot be transported once diluted and has a shelf life of 6 hours at room temperature.

Where a planned vaccination session has delivered its planned activity – and where remaining Pfizer vaccine that cannot be used within the time window of expiry (Pfizer 6 hours post dilution) is available - the following guidance should be followed to avoid waste of vaccine.

Opportunistic vaccination should occur referring to the following order of priority:

1. Eligible patient or resident who require a first dose.
2. Front facing health or social care staff who require a first dose.
3. Health and social care staff who require a first dose.

It is recommended that those planning clinics have a local plan for how ad-hoc opportunistic vaccination should be approached to ensure fairness in terms of opportunity where the only option is to provide a second dose. Provision of second doses will be monitored to ensure that they are only provided from what would otherwise be wasted vaccine. **It remains our explicit policy that no planned second doses will be provided at this point in the programme.**

Where there are no available first dose recipients and the vaccine will be wasted otherwise it is permissible to give a second dose to those eligible **residents , front line patient or client facing health and social care staff** in the following order of priority

1. Care Home resident
2. Aged > 70
3. Those categorised as [clinically extremely vulnerable](#)
4. Aged > 65
5. Those staff in JCVI clinical risk groups
6. Aged > 60
7. Aged > 55
8. Aged >50

For AZ vaccine the storage window is 6 hours post first vial puncture at 2-25C. Where a vaccinator or team are faced with a situation of certain waste the guidance above should be followed. However, please bear in mind the AZ vaccine **can** be moved between doses

Where vaccination is taking place for members of the public e.g. within a GP Practice the priorities and JCVI groupings and their priority apply. This would mean a GP practice that was nearing the end of a planned >80's clinic with a number of doses of vaccine that would be otherwise wasted could attempt to recruit >75's etc to avoid wasting vaccine. Again first dose is always currently a priority over second.

Guidance on shielding and protecting people who are clinically extremely vulnerable from COVID-19

[www.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk)