

7 January 2022- Important Notice | Pfizer 5-11 rollout | top up Pfizer 12+ doses | Appointments | mRNA Use-by Dates | Patient enquiries not directed to VOC

Dear Service Provider,

This email provides information about a range of matters relevant to participating pharmacies in the COVID-19 Vaccination in Community Pharmacy Program (CVCP), as follows:

- Reminder about the Pfizer 5-11 rollout.
- One-off top-up of additional Pfizer 12+ doses.
- Appointments
- mRNA COVID Vaccines – use by date for thawed vs manufacture.
- Patient enquiries not to be directed to VOC

Reminder about the Pfizer 5-11 rollout

From 10 January 2022, participating pharmacies will be allowed to administer Pfizer 5-11 years COVID-19 vaccines (orange top). Please remember the following important points:

- Pfizer 5-11 years doses are a specific paediatric formulation and contain a lower dose of vaccine than the adult formulation. It can be stored for a maximum of 10 weeks between 2°C to 8°C.
- The primary course is two doses with an interval of 8 weeks.

Importantly:

- Review the specific training available in respect of Pfizer 5-11 years vaccines prior to receiving your first delivery.
- Do **not use the adult formulation** to administer doses to patients aged 5 to 11.
- Ensure to register paediatric doses of a COVID-19 vaccine for children aged 5 to 11 years in the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) as per usual practice.
- Please note, while the 5-11 rollout formally commences on 10 January 2022, if you have available Pfizer 5-11 stock on site, capacity to administer, demand, and you have completed the required training you can commence ahead of 10 January.

One-off top-up of additional Pfizer 12+ doses

Pharmacies with orders scheduled to arrive in the week ending 14 January 2022 will receive an extra 240 doses of Pfizer (12 years+). This is in recognition of the high demand for vaccines over the holiday period.

If you have an order due for delivery in the week ending 14 January:



- you do not need to do anything to your order in (CVAS).
- you will also receive additional consumables.

Importantly:

- If you require vaccine stock more urgently, you are encouraged to reach out to any nearby vaccination sites administering COVID-19 vaccines who may have excess doses available for redistribution.
- If you do not require the increased allocation, please remember that you are able to skip your next order, or refer to the Transfer of Vaccines [policy](#).

Please contact the Vaccine Operations Centre if you have any concerns, on 1800 318 208 or COVID19VaccineOperationsCentre@health.gov.au.

Appointments

Pharmacies are reminded they should not open or book appointments in excess of vaccine orders – and await until confirmation of delivery and additional doses has been received. This reminder applies to all vaccine types.

mRNA COVID Vaccines – use by date for thawed vs manufacture

It is vital that sites are aware of the differences between the thaw use-by date and the manufacture expiry date for the mRNA vaccines (Moderna and Pfizer):

- The manufacture expiry date on the vial indicates the expiry for that batch of the product.
- The thaw/defrost use-by date on the box is the final date that the product can be used after it has been removed from the freezer or ultra-low storage to commence thawing.

Whichever date is earliest is the latest date the vaccines can be administered to a patient.

Importantly:

- Pharmacies should ensure they have arrangements in place to ensure an awareness of the thaw use-by date for each vial is maintained once it has been removed from the box, noting that thaw used-by dates are usually affixed to the box rather than the vial.
- Pharmacies should have clearly labelled and visible thaw use-by dates for each vial – noting these will be different for subsequent deliveries.
- Both the thaw use-by dates and the manufacture expiry date should be checked prior to every vaccine administration.

Please ensure your site has clear processes to identify and action these dates to prevent vaccine administration errors.

Patient enquiries not to be directed to VOC

The Vaccine Operations Centre (VOC) is intended to be accessed by vaccine providers, is **not a resource for the general public and contact details for the VOC should not be provided to members of the public.**

The VOC operates a contact centre to support COVID vaccination providers, state and territory authorities and other government agencies supporting the COVID-19 response.

If members of the public have an enquiry relating to COVID-19 vaccines:

- they can contact the Department of Health at covidvaccineenquiries@health.gov.au.
- Alternatively, they can contact the National Coronavirus Hotline on 1800 020 080 which operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Kind regards,

Pharmacy Programs Administrator