



Pharmacy Bulletin

18 January 2024

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

Key Messages

COVID-19 VACCINATION PROGRAM

COVID-19 Vaccine recommendations

Further advice on recommended COVID-19 doses will be provided in early 2024.

People who haven't had their recommended COVID-19 vaccinations in the last twelve months should get vaccinated and not wait until the updated advice is provided.

People who received all recommended doses should wait until updated recommendations are advised in early 2024.

The **Australian Immunisation Handbook** (the Handbook) includes a COVID-19 Chapter that provides information about COVID-19, vaccines, and recommendations for vaccination. Providers can find guidance on patient eligibility, suitability, dosage and administration for all available COVID-19 vaccines in the Handbook [here](#).

VACCINE ADMINISTRATION ERRORS

There has been an increase in Vaccine Administration Errors (VAEs) reported recently in relation to the Pfizer (XBB.1.5) 12 years+ (**Grey**) vaccine and the Pfizer (XBB.1.5) 5-11 years (**Light Blue**) vaccine. **Sites are reminded that these vaccines have different formulations and are for different co-horts. Please refer to the XBB.1.5 Factsheets in the resources section of this bulletin.**

Pfizer (XBB.1.5) 12 years+ (**Grey**) vaccine

This vaccine comes in **multi-dose vials containing 6 doses** and is for people aged 12 years+ only. Please refer to the Australian Immunisation Handbook [here](#). **You must not administer this vaccine to any other co-hort.**

Pfizer (XBB.1.5) 5-11 years (Light Blue) vaccine

This vaccine comes in a **single-dose vial** and is for children aged 5-11 years only. Please refer to the Australian Immunisation Handbook [here](#). **You must not administer this vaccine to any other co-hort.**

MODERNA EXPIRY

Moderna Bivalent BA.4-5 12 years + PFS

The Commonwealth supply of the Moderna Bivalent BA.4-5 12 years + PFS vaccine **expired on Wednesday 20 December 2023**.

To avoid any potential Vaccine Administration Errors, sites are reminded **not to administer this vaccine** and discard any remaining stock, ensuring that it is **reported as wastage in CVAS**.

Alternative Vaccines

There are a range of mRNA vaccines that continue to be available for people aged 12 years and over. These include:

- Moderna (XBB.1.5) 12 Years + (PFS) vaccine
- Pfizer (XBB.1.5) 12 years + (Grey) vaccine
- Pfizer Bivalent (BA.4/5) 12 Years + (Grey) vaccine

NOVAVAX SUPPLY

The last ordering window for the Novavax vaccine closed on 5 January 2024 and you can no longer order this vaccine. Sites who placed an order for this vaccine in the last order window can expect to receive the vaccine by 19 January 2024.

Reminder: Sites receiving Novavax with a Requested Delivery Date of 19 January 2024 are reminded that you will have a **shorter period of time** to use the vaccine until its expiry on **31 January 2024**.

If you missed out on placing an order for Novavax by 5 January 2024 and you have patients requiring Novavax you can reach out to your local PHN and they may be able to assist in facilitating a transfer of this vaccine from another site prior to the expiration of the vaccine.

VACCINE OPERATIONS CENTRE UPDATE

The Vaccine Operations Centre (VOC) will be **closed** for the Australia Day Public Holiday on **Friday 26 January 2023**.

Normal operating hours will resume at 9am Monday 29 January 2023.

Emails to covid19vaccineoperationscentre@health.gov.au will be answered when normal hours resume.

REMINDERS

Transferring of Vaccine Stock

Sites are reminded that **before transferring** COVID-19 vaccines, you must check the COVID-19 Vaccination Administration System (CVAS) to ensure the receiving site are eligible to receive doses and are currently participating in the program. The **COVID-19 Transfer Policy** can assist sites wishing to undertake any stock transfers.

RESOURCES

- [COVID-19 Vaccine Transfer Policy](#)
- [Updated FACTSHEET – Pfizer \(XBB.1.5\) 12 years+ \(Grey\)](#)
- [Updated FACTSHEET – Pfizer \(XBB.1.5\) 5-11 years \(Light Blue\)](#)