



Booster Main Messages and Resources For Social Care Staff

20th December 2021

Main Messages

It is critically important for social care staff to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19

Being fully vaccinated includes having a booster 3 months after the 2nd primary dose because there is a new variant of COVID-19 called Omicron. It is highly infectious, is spreading fast and two primary vaccine doses do not provide enough protection against catching Omicron as:

- **Vaccine effectiveness reduces over time.** Protection against serious illness from the:
 - Pfizer vaccine drops by over 15% after 20 weeks of having your 2nd dose,
 - Moderna vaccine drops by nearly 10% after 12 weeks,
 - Astra Zeneca vaccine drops to 8% 13 weeks after dose 2 and its effectiveness in preventing Omicron infection is very low
- **After a booster people have high levels of protection:**
 - 93.1% protection rate against serious illness if they had Astra Zeneca as their primary vaccine
 - 94% protection if they had Pfizer as their primary vaccine .
- **Advice on how to support your employees to get a booster vaccination** is available from in the “Supporting your employees to get their Covid-19 booster” document available in the [employers toolkit](#).



Main Messages

- **Having the booster is equally important if a worker has already had COVID-19** because we don't yet know how long people who have recovered from COVID-19 are immune for, or the level of any immunity.
- **Frontline social care workers have priority access to having a COVID-19 booster** because a booster will strengthen their protection against serious COVID illness and will give the worker, their family, and the people they support the best possible defence against COVID-19.
- **We know the vaccines are safe because** millions of adults from all different ethnic backgrounds, age groups and with underlying health conditions have now been vaccinated safely.
- **There are very few people who should not have a booster**, but if a member of staff had serious side effects after any previous dose (such as a severe allergic reaction) they should discuss this with their doctor or a specialist before having a booster.



Main Messages

- To encourage your staff to take up the opportunity to have a COVID-19 Booster it is important that you:
 - Have a dialogue with staff about the benefits of a booster.
 - Ensure staff can access vaccinations when roving teams visit/revisit care homes to vaccinate residents and amend rota's if that means unvaccinated staff can be on site when these visits are made.
 - Use the [campaign resources](#) to run awareness campaigns in your organisation and help employees to access reliable and accurate information about vaccines.
 - Support staff who need help to make an appointment or find a Walk-In Centre and ensure they know **there should be a separate priority queue at each site** that they as care workers can join so their queuing time is minimised.
 - Support staff who need transport to access a booster.
 - Allow staff to access a booster during paid work time
 - Guarantee staff that if they need time off due to the temporary side effects from having a booster it will be allowed **and** they will be paid.



Useful resources

- If after hearing the main messages from the previous slides a member of staff wants further information before making their booster decision refer them to this NHS [Guide to booster vaccinations for people aged 18 and over](#) and to the NHS COVID booster Q&A PDF file within the [employers toolkit](#)
- If after reading the guide and Q&A staff have further questions it is good practice to arrange for them to have a confidential one to one conversation with a trusted peer (workforce champion) or with a respected clinician.
- If staff want an easily understood explanation of why boosters strengthen immunity refer them to this BBC article [Omicron: Why do boosters work if two doses struggle?](#)
- When your staff are ready to get a booster they can get one by:
 - Booking a booster appointment through the [national booking service](#),
 - Using a [walk-in centre](#) where social care staff can join a priority queue if they provide evidence that they work in social care such as a staff identity card, a letter from their employer or a recent pay slip.
 - Using other locally available options. Information will be available from local Vaccine websites and at local vaccine single points of contact (SPOCs)

