# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **TITLE** | **Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) advice on the 2023 COVID-19 vaccination programme** |
| **DATE** | **25 January 2023** |
| **BY** | **Eluned Morgan MS, Minister for Health and Social Services** |

The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) is an [independent expert advisory committee](https://eur01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fen.wikipedia.org%2Fwiki%2FNational_Immunization_Technical_Advisory_Group&data=05%7C01%7CChristopher.Jones%40gov.wales%7Cdc82d4d6c8c44f20d88108da63177ffc%7Ca2cc36c592804ae78887d06dab89216b%7C0%7C0%7C637931249816477220%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=%2FA7I7VS6fSDP%2BK%2FgUYOvRAIZForu5mpEFdnDAZ616Fw%3D&reserved=0), which advises United Kingdom health departments about [immunisation](https://eur01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fen.wikipedia.org%2Fwiki%2FImmunisation&data=05%7C01%7CChristopher.Jones%40gov.wales%7Cdc82d4d6c8c44f20d88108da63177ffc%7Ca2cc36c592804ae78887d06dab89216b%7C0%7C0%7C637931249816477220%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=KSpiV5mYCzoB6PuMa6U5uvA6agex%2F9H38etE4to7M3o%3D&reserved=0), making recommendations about [vaccination schedules](https://eur01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fen.wikipedia.org%2Fwiki%2FVaccination_schedule&data=05%7C01%7CChristopher.Jones%40gov.wales%7Cdc82d4d6c8c44f20d88108da63177ffc%7Ca2cc36c592804ae78887d06dab89216b%7C0%7C0%7C637931249816477220%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=u6flzlmCy6bQBtAGRyIHqyo6WQlPDDGURjWHZC%2B0Dlc%3D&reserved=0) and [vaccine](https://eur01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fen.wikipedia.org%2Fwiki%2FVaccine&data=05%7C01%7CChristopher.Jones%40gov.wales%7Cdc82d4d6c8c44f20d88108da63177ffc%7Ca2cc36c592804ae78887d06dab89216b%7C0%7C0%7C637931249816477220%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=bm2HAtiN25lxFQ4C2dkaIMYlKzmwHCoFR%2BBOtb1NaqE%3D&reserved=0) safety.

As part of its ongoing review of the Covid-19 vaccination programme, the JCVI has today published a statement with its latest advice on the 2023 programme.

Whilst there is high level of strong population immunity developed over the past two and a half years, the risk of severe COVID-19 continues to be disproportionately greater in those from older age groups, residents in care homes for older adults, and persons with certain underlying health conditions. There also still remains on-going uncertainty regarding virus evolution, the durability and breadth of immunity, and the epidemiology of infection

The JCVI has indicated that for a smaller group of persons (such as persons of older age and those who are immunosuppressed) an **extra booster vaccine dose** may be offered in **spring 2023,** whilstfor **autumn 2023** persons at higher risk of severe COVID-19 would be offered a **booster vaccine dose.** Emergency surge vaccine responses may also be required should a novel variant of concern emerge with clinically significant biological differences compared to the Omicron variant.

In addition, the JCVI is also recommending some changes to the universal offer programme:

* The current **nobody left behind offer of the** **2021 booster** (third dose) of COVID-19 vaccination for persons aged 16 to 49 years who are not in a clinical risk group should **close** in alignment with the end of the autumn 2022 vaccination campaign.
* The current **nobody left behind offer of a primary course** of COVID-19 vaccination should move, over the course of 2023, towards a more targeted offer during vaccination campaigns to protect those persons at higher risk of severe COVID-19.

This advice means that from 2023 COVID-19 vaccinations will only be offered to specific people at certain times (during specific campaigns) unless prescribed by a clinician.

Further information will be made available in due course on the formal date of the closure of both these elements of the programme.

Alongside my UK counterparts, I have accepted this advice, and subject to supply, NHS Wales stands ready to start operationalising this programme in 2023.

As ever, I am extremely grateful to the NHS and everyone involved in the vaccination programme for their continued hard work.