

Scottish Vaccine Update

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BCG vaccine available

BCG vaccine is now available to order from NHS board Vaccine Holding Centres. The available batch expires in February 2016 and vaccine should therefore not be stock piled. Please note that each pack contains 10 multi-dose vials of BCG vaccine.

BCG administration and reducing wastage

Immunisers are encouraged to organise the administration of BCG vaccinations in ways that optimise the use of the current multi-dose vials, for example by scheduling patients requiring BCG into the same clinic.

The number of doses extracted from a reconstituted vial in practice varies, depending on the specific type of syringe and needle used, as well as on the surplus of vaccine removed during vaccination. Adherence to guidelines on the administration of BCG vaccine, including syringe and needle type, can maximise the number of doses obtained from each vial. Guidance on administration of the BCG vaccine can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

BCG prioritisation

Due to on-going constraints with the global supply of BCG vaccine, the World Health Organisation (WHO) has called on all countries to reduce BCG vaccine wastage, to ensure that countries with highest TB rates receive priority and to target individuals who will benefit most from BCG vaccination. Therefore during this period of constrained BCG vaccine supply, HPS endorses the WHO statement to limit BCG vaccination to neonates and infants of recognized high-risk groups for tuberculosis (TB) or to tuberculin-negative children under five years (groups A-D below). The WHO statement is available [here](#). Immunisers are therefore asked to be responsible in ordering stock for these groups first. Older children who are eligible for the vaccine (groups E-H below), are a lower priority but may be vaccinated alongside younger children to optimise clinic size.

BCG vaccination for occupational health reasons (group I below) remain lowest priority during this period of constrained BCG vaccine supply. Occupational health departments and infection control teams are advised to reinforce their local TB infection control precautions to all staff. Where a health care worker or student is found to be tuberculin negative and is eligible for BCG, vaccination is not required before that individual is cleared to work. Vaccination can then be undertaken when further stock becomes available, hopefully later this year.

Groups eligible for vaccination

HIGHEST PRIORITY

- A. All infants (aged 0 to 12 months) with a parent or grandparent who was born in a country where the annual incidence of TB is 40/100,000 or greater.¹

¹ For country information on prevalence see [here](#)

- B. All infants (aged 0 to 12 months) living in areas of the UK where the annual incidence of TB is 40/100,000 or greater.²
- C. Infants aged older than 12 months who were not vaccinated during their first 12 months due to BCG vaccine shortage.
- D. Previously unvaccinated children aged one to five years with a parent or grandparent who was born in a country where the annual incidence of TB is 40/100,000 or greater. These children should be identified at suitable opportunities, and can normally be vaccinated without tuberculin testing.

MODERATE PRIORITY

- E. Previously unvaccinated, tuberculin-negative children aged from six to under 16 years of age with a parent or grandparent who was born in a country where the annual incidence of TB is 40/100,000 or greater. These children should be identified at suitable opportunities, tuberculin tested and vaccinated if negative (please see Green Book section on tuberculin testing prior to BCG vaccination available [here](#)).
- F. Previously unvaccinated tuberculin-negative individuals under 16 years of age who are contacts of cases of respiratory TB (following recommended contact management advice available [here](#)).
- G. Previously unvaccinated, tuberculin-negative individuals under 16 years of age who were born in or who have lived for a prolonged period (at least three months) in a country with an annual TB incidence of 40/100,000 or greater.
- H. Previously unvaccinated, tuberculin-negative individuals under 16 years of age who are going to live or work with local people for more than three months in a country where the annual incidence of TB is 40/100,000 or greater.

LOWEST PRIORITY

- I. Individuals at occupational risk.

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²Universal vaccination operates in areas of the country where the TB incidence is 40/100,000 or greater. This is applied for operational reasons since these geographical areas generally have a high concentration of families who come from regions of the world where the TB incidence is 40/100,000 or greater. The decision to introduce universal vaccination in an area is based on geography in order to target vaccination to children who may be at increased risk of TB in an effective way. It does not imply that living in areas that have an incidence of TB 40/100,000 or greater puts children at increased risk of TB infection. This is because most infections of children are likely to occur in household settings. Further, there has been little evidence of TB transmission in schools in the UK.

Scottish Vaccine Update information on vaccine supplies is based upon information obtained from Public Health England Vaccine Update issue 233.