

# **Scotland's COVID-19 Vaccine Deployment Plan 2021**

## **Update – July 2021**

## 1. Ministerial Foreword

I am pleased to present the second update to Scotland's COVID-19 Deployment Plan, which provides an outline of the progress in delivering the largest vaccination programme in history.

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to affect daily life in Scotland, and we are continuing to deal with a surge in new cases, currently driven by the dominance of the Delta variant of the virus. Vaccination remains the prime reason that the gap in infection and hospitalisation rates is growing. As we move towards reassessing lockdown restrictions across Scotland we must remember that the fight against COVID-19 is likely to be with us for some time ahead.

### Vision

We released our first COVID-19 Vaccine Deployment Plan in January 2021 and published a subsequent update in March.

I am publishing this updated plan to provide an overview of our progress since March, outline next steps in the programme including our approach to vaccinating 12-17 year olds, and the potential COVID-19 booster programme in autumn.

We have purposefully adopted a Human Rights Based approach and are committed to delivering a quality, inclusive vaccination programme that is: Person-centred; Safe; Efficient; Effective; Equitable; Timely; and Local.

### What we have done

We have worked with all relevant stakeholders to deliver an efficient programme that has responded to emerging clinical advice provided by the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) including how best to respond to more transmissible variants. All the while keeping pace with available supply to ensure maximum protection has been provided to the most clinically vulnerable.

We are extremely grateful to everyone involved in delivering the programme including NHS, local government and volunteers who continue to play an important role in the programme. I also want to thank the numerous groups that have stepped up to support us including faith, third sector and community groups who have all supported our efforts to deliver an inclusive national programme.

We reached a significant milestone in our COVID-19 vaccination programme on 18 July 2021 when all eligible adults in Scotland had been invited to receive a first dose of a COVID-19 vaccination. We continue to vaccinate as many people as we can. By 23 July, 89% of all eligible adults had received their first dose.

### Where we are now

The vaccination programme continues to be responsive to peoples' needs and I was pleased to be able to see staff in the vaccination bus delivering to hard-to-reach communities. We are also working closely with Health Boards to plan for the potential COVID-19 booster vaccination programme, guided by the JCVI's interim advice. We look forward to receiving the Committee's final advice in due course which will inform the approach in the autumn.

In line with JCVI advice, we recognise the need for operational flexibility to maximise uptake. Our deployment teams utilise their understanding of local health systems and demographics to provide clear communication and outreach activity, promoting vaccination within identified groups where uptake has been lower. See section 3 for further information.

### Focus groups

From focus group discussions with younger people we identified that messaging from experts rather than peers was regarded as more important with that audience and has greater credibility than, for example, celebrities. We worked with Professor Nicola Steedman, Deputy Chief Medical Officer, to develop a short video on the importance of vaccination and where to find accurate information – on NHS Inform – to inform their decision on vaccination.

Advice from the JCVI also guided our approach to respond to emerging evidence about the vaccines themselves and also variants of concern. During Phase 2, JCVI updated its advice to set out that, where possible, an alternative to the AstraZeneca vaccine should be preferentially offered to those under 40. For those aged 30-39, the advice also recommends this should only be where no substantial delay or barrier in access to vaccination would arise. In addition, the emergence of the Delta variant and evidence about vaccine efficacy following one and two doses, led to a change to the recommended dose interval from 12 to 8 weeks, where vaccine supply permits. These major changes to the programme and delivery systems were rapidly operationalised.

We have included the advice within our national policy, and the Chief Medical Officer has communicated this to Health Boards, recognising the dynamic approach to deploying the vaccine in Scotland.

### Four UK nations approach

We continue to deliver the COVID-19 vaccination programme, informed by the advice received from the JCVI, maintaining a consistent approach wherever it is appropriate to do so across the four UK nations. Scotland's Health Boards follow the nationally agreed prioritisation schedule to vaccinate Scotland's population as quickly as possible.

Although our approach to cohorts has been consistent with the four nations approach, we have sought to clarify our definitions to reflect Scottish circumstances. For example, we expanded our definition of unpaid carers within priority group 6 to ensure all those over the age of 16 who provide vital support to those they care for were able to access the vaccine at an early stage.

### Our progress

In our March Deployment Plan, we said we would aim to offer everyone in JCVI priority groups 1 to 9 a first dose of vaccine by early May 2021. We went beyond offering the vaccine and vaccinated 98% of those aged over 50 as at Friday 7 May 2021, with their first dose.

The vaccination programme has been – thanks to the dedication of staff and volunteers – an enormous success, exceeding expectations. Since it began on 8 December 2020, and as at 7:30 am on 23 July the programme has delivered:

- 3,992,327 people protected through their first dose of the COVID-19 vaccination; 3,966,384 of these are aged 18 and over, which represents 89%.
- 3,044,903 people provided with maximum protection by receiving their second dose; of these, 3,034,636 are aged 18 and over which is 68% of all adults.
- Given we know that risk increases with age, 2,787,450 people aged 40 have received their first dose vaccination which equates to 97% of this cohort. 2,606,112 (91%) of this group have now received their second dose vaccination.

Latest progress by age on first doses

(this includes everyone in the selected age group):

- 266,611 people aged 80 or over
- 198,317 people aged 75-79
- 284,999 people aged 70-74
- 300,270 people aged 65-69
- 354,436 people aged 60-64
- 393,376 people aged 55-59
- 378,584 people aged 50-54
- 610,857 people aged 40-49
- 584,912 people aged 30-39
- 594,022 people aged 18-29

Latest progress by age on second doses

(this includes everyone in the selected age group):

- 257,719 people aged 80 or over
- 194,711 people aged 75-79
- 280,507 people aged 70-74
- 294,663 people aged 65-69
- 345,596 people aged 60-64
- 379,542 people aged 55-59
- 360,036 people aged 50-54
- 493,338 people aged 40-49
- 250,656 people aged 30-39
- 177,868 people aged 18-29

Figure 1 shows the cumulative doses of COVID-19 vaccine – both first and second doses – administered in Scotland as at 23 July 2021.

As part of our commitment to ensure administration of the programme is fully transparent, Public Health Scotland (PHS) publishes [uptake figures \(both first and second dose\)](#) every day on its website.

In order to operationalise the latest advice from JCVI, we have changed the second dose schedule from 12 to 8 weeks. From 21 June, all mainland Health Boards scheduled future second dose appointments at 8 weeks and are continuing to actively encourage people to come forward for their second dose if they have waited more than 8 weeks since their first dose. This is in direct response to the Delta variant. It is important to note the JCVI does not recommend further reducing of this dose schedule, as this would shorten the duration of the protection provided by the vaccine.

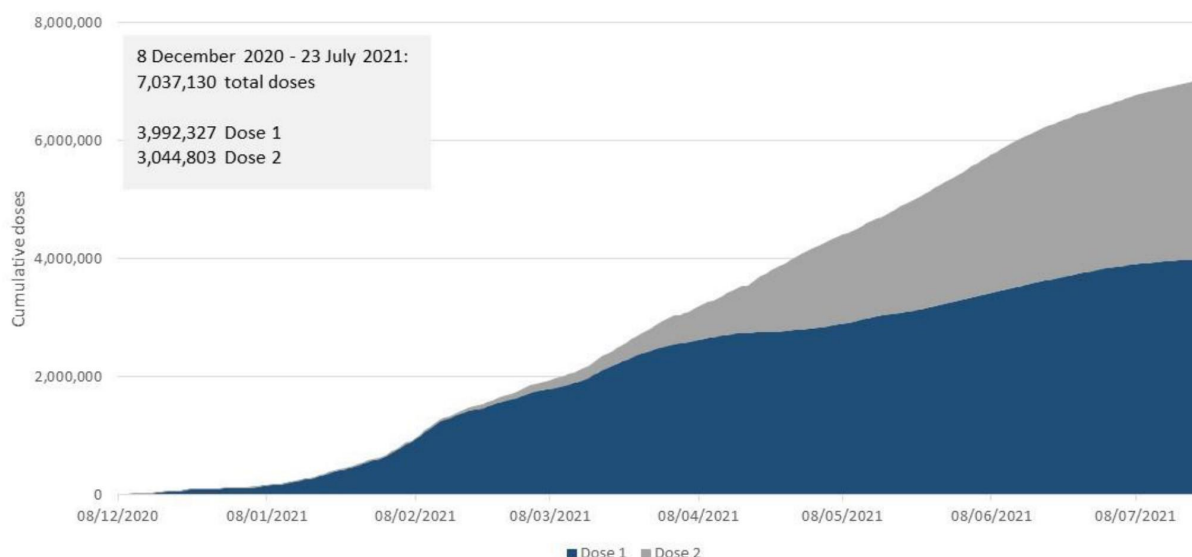


Figure 1 – Cumulative doses in Scotland by day, as at 23 July 2021

### Going beyond our original plans

In our March Deployment Plan, we confirmed our planning assumption of 80% vaccination uptake by those in JCVI priority groups 1 to 9. This means we were planning for around 80% of people who were offered vaccination to take up the invitation. Latest progress as at 23 July 2021 shows we have now provided first dose vaccinations far in excess of our original aim of 80% for these priority age groups.

Progress for age based JCVI priority groups shows we have provided first dose vaccinations for:  
(this includes everyone in the selected age group)

- 98% of people aged 80 or over
- (complete) people aged 75-79\*
- 99.7% people aged 70-74
- 99.9% people aged 65-69
- (complete) people aged 60-64\*
- 99% of people aged 55-59
- 96% of people aged 50-54
- 91% of people aged 40-49
- 80% of people aged 30-39
- 71% of people aged 18-29

\*Vaccination uptake for groups marked complete are considered complete based on the estimated eligible population at a set point in time.

Progress for age-based JCVI priority groups shows we have provided second dose vaccinations for:

(this includes everyone in the selected age group)

- 95% of people aged 80 or over
- 98% of people aged 75-79
- 98% of people aged 70-74
- 98% of people aged 65-69
- 98% of people aged 60-64
- 95% of people aged 55-59
- 92% of people aged 50-54
- 73% of people aged 40-49
- 34% of people aged 30-39
- 21% of people aged 18-29

Progress for the non-age based JCVI priority groups shows we have provided first dose vaccinations for:

- 98% of current residents of care homes for older adults with 94.5% having received both doses
- we have vaccinated in excess of the initial target population estimate of staff working in all care homes for both first and second doses.
- 96% of those who were advised to shield, part of the clinically extremely vulnerable group
- 90% of people aged 16-64 with underlying health conditions
- 94.5% of people in specified frontline healthcare roles have received their first dose and 89.8% have had both doses\*
- 88.8% of people in specified frontline social care roles have received their first dose and 81% have had both doses\*

\*Specified frontline health care workers and specified frontline social care workers figures provide a more precise measure of vaccine uptake in key frontline roles including registered NHS staff within the job family nursing/midwifery, medical and dental, ambulance services, Allied Health Professions and registered GPs; and registered Scottish Social Services Council staff.

These percentages include all people in the selected age group/JCVI priority group.

Figure 2 shows as at 23 July 2021 the percentage of people vaccinated in the age groups prioritised in phase 1, based on the latest available mid-2020 population estimates published by National Records of Scotland. The initial estimate of 80% vaccination take up by those in JCVI priority groups 1 to 9 is shown by a red line.