



UK Health Security Agency

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Event: Delayed supply of BCG vaccine and temporary restriction of ordering via ImmForm

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Authorised by:

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IRP Level: Standard

Incident Lead: Colin Campbell

Instructions for Cascade

- Please note, notes are routinely cascaded to the below groups:
- UKHSA Private Office Groups who cascade onwards within Groups
- UKHSA Health Protection in Regions:
 - UKHSA Field Services
 - UKHSA Health Protection Teams including UKHSA Regional Deputy Directors
 - Deputy Directors in Regions Directorate
- UKHSA Lab Management Teams
- UKHSA Regional Communications
- Generic inbox for each of the Devolved Administrations
- Inboxes for each of the Crown Dependencies
- DHSC CMO
- OHID Regional Directors of Public Health
- National NHSE EPRR
- NHSE National Operations Centre
- TB Unit to cascade to TB nurses' network and British thoracic society
- UKHSA microbiologists to cascade to non-UKHSA labs (NHS labs and private)
- UKHSA microbiologists to cascade to NHS Trust infection leads
- NHSE National Operations Centre to cascade to British Association of Paediatric TB, Infectious Disease teams, Maternity units, NHS TB services in Acute and community Trusts
- Royal College of Physicians - sarah.clarke@rcp.ac.uk
- Royal College of General Practitioners - Chair-RCGP@rcgp.org.uk
- Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists - president@rcoq.org.uk
- Faculty of Occupational Medicine - president@fom.ac.uk

- Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health - s.w.turner@abdn.ac.uk
- Faculty of Public Health - president@fph.org.uk

Summary:

UKHSA has been informed by the sole supplier of BCG vaccine that is licenced for use in the UK that a delivery has been delayed for administrative reasons. This may lead to delay to the infant BCG programme, occupational health BCG vaccination and other indications for BCG as outlined in the Green Book should rescheduled deliveries not occur in time.

Background and Interpretation:

Due to supply issues, central stocks of BCG have fallen below the critical buffer stock level and there is a need to temporarily implement measures to conserve stock for the national BCG programme which serves many underserved communities at higher risk of TB.

We request NHS colleagues organise clinics and the administration of BCG vaccinations in ways that optimise the use of the current multi-dose vials (each pack contains 10 multi dose vials).

BCG vaccine should be prioritised for eligible infants under the age of 12 months, according to the Green Book [Green Book chapter 32 – Tuberculosis (TB)], to prevent infants at increased risk of exposure to TB from becoming infected as they are at increased risk of developing more severe disease.

BCG vaccination for occupational health reasons is a lower priority.

Until further notice, BCG vaccine orders are currently capped at 1 pack (10 vials per pack) per week for NHS customers, and ordering for private accounts, which includes occupational health departments, is temporarily closed. Requests for extra vaccine will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

The overall impact on the population of this delay is likely to be low if the rescheduled delivery from the supplier arrives as planned, but if there were to be further delays, we will provide updated communication at that time to all relevant stakeholders in the BCG programme.

Implications & Recommendations for UKHSA Regions:

HPT to be made aware of the current incident as Local teams may receive enquires relating to controls placed on ordering BCG.

Implications & Recommendations for UKHSA sites and services:

They may experience an increase in calls and enquires, such as prioritisation, catch-up sessions and level of risk of TB in children and can refer to the further information provided in this briefing note in responding to any enquiries.

Communications to media and the wider public will be handled reactively to avoid creating undue concerns.

Implications & Recommendations for NHS:

The NHS should look to organise the administration of BCG vaccinations in ways that optimise the use of the current multi-dose vials to conserve existing locally held stock.

To effectively monitor the supply and usage of the BCG vaccine, all sites must submit a weekly stock take via ImmForm every Thursday or Friday. This process ensures the national programme remains informed about current stock levels and can identify if adjustments to allocations are necessary.

Continue to identify and flag up on local systems eligible babies and young individuals to be vaccinated.

Prepare to maintain a list of susceptible high risk infants who missed BCG vaccination in order to facilitate recall and vaccination should any cancellation of clinics be necessary as a result of any interruption of supply.

Establish and maintain a clear communication pathway to update parents/carers on appointments.

References/ Sources of information:

Green Book Chapter 32 Tuberculosis

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5b645a2140f0b66875559e93/Greenbook_chapter_32_Tuberculosis.pdf
