



Australian Government



Primary Care Vaccine Roll-out

Provider Bulletin

9 March 2023

Bulletins provide you with regular updates and guidance on the COVID-19 Vaccine Program.

Key Messages

VACCINE UPDATES

Moderna Bivalent (BA.4-5) 12 years+ (PFS)

The Australian Government will include the Moderna Bivalent (BA.4-5) 12 years+ (PFS) in the COVID-19 Vaccination Program (the Program) for boosters in eligible people aged 12 years or older from **3 April 2023**.

The ordering window for sites in Tranche 1 will open on Saturday 11 March 2023.

The majority of sites currently participating in the Program will be onboarded for **Moderna Bivalent (BA.4-5) 12 years+ single dose, pre-filled syringes (PFS)**. Sites will be notified about which Tranche they are in shortly.

Please be aware, single dose, pre-filled syringe packaging is **significantly larger** than multidose vials and will take up **much more space** in your vaccine fridge. Please keep this in mind when ordering vaccines and only order what you will need and will be able to fit in your fridge.

Moderna Bivalent BA.1

The existing **Moderna Bivalent 18 years+ (Blue/Green)** that has been available in Australia since September 2022 has been renamed in the COVID-19 Vaccine Administrative System (CVAS) to **Moderna Bivalent (BA.1) 18 years+ (Blue/Green)** to clearly differentiate it from the new BA.4-5 formulation. The existing **Moderna Bivalent (BA.1) 18 years+ (Blue/Green)** is only for use as a booster dose in adults 18 years and over.

To align with the opening of orders for the first Tranche of **Moderna Bivalent (BA.4-5) 12 years+ (PFS)** all primary care sites will have the Moderna Bivalent BA.1 allocation reduced to 50 doses per fortnight from the ordering window commencing Saturday 11 March 2023.

If you urgently require additional stock, you can reach out to any nearby vaccination sites administering COVID-19 vaccines who may have excess doses available for redistribution or your PHN who may be able to assist you.

Moderna 6 months to 5 years (Blue/Purple) Vaccine

The Commonwealth supply of the Moderna 6 months to 5 years (Blue/Purple) vaccine is close to expiry, you will soon no longer be able to order or administer this vaccine product.

Ordering

Activity	Date
Last order window opens	Saturday 25 March 2023
Last order window closes	11:59pm Friday 31 March 2023
Last Requested Delivery Date	Friday 14 April 2023
Last doses expire	Wednesday 3 May 2023

Administrations

The Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) [recommendation](#) for this vaccine is **2 primary course doses** [except for those with severe immunocompromise who require 3 primary doses (please refer to ATAGI advice for [3rd dose eligibility](#))].

ATAGI recommends an interval of **8 weeks** between each primary course dose. As there are only 8 weeks before the **last doses expire on 3 May 2023**, vaccine providers will need to be mindful of timeframes to ensure completion of a patient's primary vaccination course (2 doses or 3 for those with severe immunocompromise).

Sites should not be accepting any new patients for this vaccine from 8 March 2023 as they will not have time to complete their primary course with this vaccine type.

Children aged 6 months to 4 years who meet the eligibility requirements are still able to receive the **Pfizer 6 months to 4 years (Maroon) vaccine**, noting that a primary course consists of **3 doses**, given 8 weeks apart, **regardless of immunocompromise status**.

Children aged 5 years are able to receive **Pfizer 5-11 years (Orange) vaccine**, which consists of **2 primary course doses** (or 3 doses for patients with severe immunocompromise).

It is preferable to use the same brand of COVID-19 vaccine for the primary course, however an alternative vaccine brand (that is registered for the appropriate age group) can be used to complete a primary course if the same vaccine brand is not available in Australia.

- To submit a request, sites can log into the CVAS portal, navigate to the 'Manage Account' tab and click the 'Update Vaccine Access' button and follow the prompts.
- To help sites easily identify what vaccine products they currently have access to, when submitting a request there is a 'View Existing Vaccine Access' button. This button can be clicked to open a new tab, showing a summary of all vaccine products the site is currently approved to order.

AstraZeneca Vaccine Expiry and Offboarding

Please be advised that the last of the AstraZeneca (AZ) stock has now been delivered. All AZ vaccine doses will expire on **20 March 2023**.

Please check your fridges on 21 March (the day after expiry) to report any wastage in CVAS. The vaccines should then be disposed of as per existing state and territory guidelines for the disposal of clinical waste and schedule 4 medication. If there is a wastage event of 10 or more vials a Major Wastage Report will need to be completed in CVAS as soon as possible. If there are less than 10 vials, the reporting should be completed in the minor wastage section in the weekly Vaccine Stock Management Report **due no later than 9pm Friday that week.**

Once a site's stock on hand shows zero for AZ and all reporting has been completed in CVAS for this vaccine product, it will be deactivated on your behalf, unless you have already requested deactivation. Please note that Pfizer 12 years+(purple), and Novavax vaccines will continue to be available if you need access to a primary course vaccine for people 12 years and over.

Transfer of COVID-19 vaccines between participating primary care vaccination sites

Declarations and Reporting Requirements

COVID-19 vaccine stock can only be transferred between sites participating in the Program. Stock **cannot** be transferred to a site that is **not** registered with the Program.

All sites must be enabled for the transferred vaccine type and have the completed relevant site declaration in CVAS before receiving stock.

Both transferring and receiving vaccination sites need to record the transfer of vaccines within their *Vaccine Stock Management Report* via CVAS. This includes additional stock that may have been received from the state or territory government.

The *Vaccine Stock Management Report* must be completed each week, by 9pm local time Friday, even if you are not transferring or receiving stock.

VACCINE ADMINISTRATION ERRORS

Expired Vaccines

We have recently seen an increase in the number of Vaccine Administration Errors (VAEs) due to the administration of expired vaccines.

It is vital that sites are aware of the differences between the manufacture (batch) expiry date and the thaw use-by date for mRNA vaccines (Moderna and Pfizer):

- The **manufacture (batch) expiry date** on the vial (or syringes) indicates the expiry of the vaccine when **stored frozen**.
- The **thaw use-by date** is the length of time that the vaccine maintains stability when **stored refrigerated** between 2°C to 8°C. It is calculated from the time the vials (or syringes) are removed from the freezer or ultra-low temperature storage and thawing is commenced. **Whichever date is earliest is the last date the vaccines should be administered to a patient.**

All mRNA (Moderna and Pfizer) vaccines delivered thawed (at 2°C to 8°C) will have a label applied to the outer packaging indicating the vaccine use-by date, which takes into account both the manufacture and thaw use-by dates.

Examples:

Pfizer 5 - 11 years (Orange) Batch: FX8528 Defrost Date: 01/12/2022 Use By Date: 09/02/2023 Store at 2°- 8°C & protected from light. Dilute before use. Do Not Re-Freeze	Pfizer 12 years+ (Purple) Batch: 36644TB Defrost Date: 01/12/2022 Use By Date: 01/01/2023 Store at 2°- 8°C & protected from light. Dilute before use. Do Not Re-Freeze	Moderna Bivalent (BA.4-5) 12 years+ (PFS) Batch: MOD45 Defrost Date: 07/03/2023 Use By Date: 06/04/2023 Store at 2°- 8°C & protected from light. DO NOT RE-FREEZE
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Please ensure your site has clear processes to identify and action these dates to prevent vaccine administration errors.

CASE STUDY

117 patients were administered with a COVID-19 vaccine up to 100 days beyond its use-by date.

Implications:

Following advice being provided to the vaccine provider by the VOC, the vaccine provider may need to:

- contact all affected patients to inform them of the incident;
- speak with each patient to determine if they require re-vaccination, depending on the advice received; and
- work with the local public health unit.

If there are patient safety concerns or non-compliance with the Program, appropriate compliance action will be taken.

How this can be prevented:

Vaccine providers should have detailed processes and procedures in place which detail how to store, label and administer vaccines to avoid errors occurring. Providers should also check the expiry date prior to each vaccination.

VACCINE CLINIC FINDER

Healthdirect Australia Service Finder to help with COVID-19 vaccine bookings

Vaccine Clinic Finder (VCF) is joining forces with Healthdirect's Service Finder as a new and improved platform that will support consumer access to a comprehensive range of healthcare services online.

This will include finding and booking influenza and COVID-19 vaccinations for the 2023 winter season.

Other features of the updated Service Finder will include:

- an updated user interface;
- guided search; and
- multi-language support.

The updated Service Finder will replace VCF later this month as the best place for consumers to find and book a COVID-19 vaccine appointment.

In the coming weeks, we will share more information about Service Finder and any changes to managing your vaccine services information.

VACCINE OPERATIONS CENTRE UPDATE

Changes to Vaccine Operations Centre (VOC) Operating Hours

Monday 13 March 2023

The VOC will be **closed on Monday 13 March 2023** due to the **Canberra Day public holiday** and will re-open from 9:00am AEDT Tuesday 14 March 2023.

From Tuesday 14 March 2023

New VOC Operating Hours will commence from Tuesday 14 March 2023.

Current VOC Operating Hours 2023		VOC Operating Hours from Tuesday 14 March 2023	
Monday-Friday	8:30am – 7:00pm AEDT	Monday – Thursday	9:00am – 6:00pm AEDT
		Friday	9:00am – 7:00pm AEDT
Saturday	9:00am – 3:00pm AEDT	Saturday	9:00am – 1:00pm AEDT
Sunday	CLOSED	Sunday	CLOSED

You can still contact VOC via our mailbox:

COVID19VaccineOperationsCentre@Health.gov.au 24 hours a day and on 1800 318 208 during the above operating hours.