Epidemiology Unit

Ministry of Health, Nutrition and Indigenous Medicine

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All Provincial Directors of Health Services
All Regional Directors of Health Services
All Heads of Institutions
Director/National Institute of Health Sciences
All Medical Officers of Health

Supplementary Instructions on Strengthening the National Immunization Programme

The National Immunization Programme is continuously reviewed and updated In keeping with latest available updated evidence and knowledge. As such, it has been decided to issue the following instructions for further assurance of safety and quality of vaccines in the National Immunization Programme.

Number to be vaccinated per vial

In the National Immunization Programme vaccines are presented in multi-dose vials, with different dose presentations such as Live JE vaccine presented in 5 - dose vials, while OPV presented in 20-dose vials etc. It has also been observed that some multi-dose vaccine vials contain a little extra quantity than prescribed.

It is of utmost importance to administer the correct dose of vaccine to the recipient to develop the expected protection for the given disease induced by the vaccination.

For this purpose use of correct dose from a multi dose vial is important and necessary. Therefore all health care workers are here by advised to **use only the recommended/indicated number of doses from a vial, while any remaining little extra quantity (if any) of vaccine should be discarded**. This practice will also facilitate correct logistic management and record keeping including maintenance of the Vaccine Movement Register.

Reconstitution of freeze dried vaccine

Diluents are prepared by the manufacturer specifically for each vaccine and the quality of diluent is exactly matched with the required volume to arrive at the proper concentration of the product after reconstitution. Therefore, **the total contents of the diluent vial must be withdrawn** with the reconstitution syringe and added to the vaccine for reconstitution. This may occasionally provide one or two extra doses in the vaccine vial to potential withdrawal excesses, and this is entirely acceptable. These extra doses, however, **should not be used and limited to the only prescribed number of doses in the given vaccine vial.**

Use of reconstituted vaccine

The WHO and manufacturers recommend that all freeze dried vaccines should be discarded after 06 hours of reconstitution or at the end of the clinic session whichever comes first, thereby, preventing the possibility of rare Adverse Events Following Immunization (AEFI). To ensure good safety practices, **reconstituted vaccine vials at one clinic, under whatever circumstances, should not be taken for use in another clinic**, even within 06 hours stipulated herein.

Storage of Live JE Vaccine (LJEV)

It has now been recommended to store LJEV with other live vaccines as freezing will not affect the vaccine potency. Hence, LJEV can be stored and transported together with other live attenuated vaccines.

Labeling of vaccine vials at immunization sessions

After opening any vaccine vial, the opening date should be clearly written on the vial. For the reconstituted vaccine vials too, the time of opening, together with the date should be written on the vial. For vaccines, in keeping with the open vial policy, the number of doses used at the session should also be written on the vial. For this recording purpose on the vial a tag or etc.. can be used. Please ensure not to cover important information over the vaccine label including Vaccine Vial Monitor.

Provision of Immunization services in Hospitals

Routine immunization data

Action should be taken by all medical institutions to provide immunization services through regular immunization clinics, in keeping with instructions issued by D.G.H.S. vide his circular letter No. EPID/EPI/2/2014 dated 08.08.2014.

All EPI data including BCG immunization data should be forwarded to the area M.O.H. through the duly completed EPI Quarterly return before the 10th of the month following the quarter.

Maintaining an institutional BCG Register

All medical institutions should maintain a BCG register with minimum of following information

Date of Immunization	Name of the Baby/Mother	Date of Birth	Personnel Health No. (PHN).	Batch No.	VVM status	Expiry date

Please advise all concerned to adhere to the above instructions, making this document available for easy reference by the relevant staff.

These instructions supersede all previous instructions issued with regard to immunization.

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