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சுவசிரிபாய
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சுகாதார அமைச்சு
Ministry of Health

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Your No.)

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திகதி) 2021/11/26
Date)

Director-NHSL,
Provincial Directors of Health Services
Regional Directors of Health Services
Directors of all Teaching, Provincial General, General and Base hospitals,

Booster dose of Covid 19 vaccine for age group 60 year and above in all districts

COMIRNATY - Covid 19 mRNA Vaccine (Nucleoside modified -Pfizer BNT) vaccination campaign for booster dose, from 27/11/2021

The Ministry of Health has taken the decision to include the age group of 60 year and above to provide a booster vaccination against Covid-19.

- The vaccine for the booster dose campaign will be the “COMIRNATY” - Covid 19 mRNA Vaccine (Nucleoside modified -Pfizer BNT).
- It is advised to provide only **one dose** for those who have completed 2 doses from any Covid-19 vaccine type and the time elapsed 3 month from the 2nd dose.
- Arrange to provide booster vaccination to all in 60 years of age and above through organized clinics at the field level and hospitals with adequate communication to get down all 60 year age group and above in all districts, to complete at the earliest possible.
- Those who have suffered from Covid-19 disease after 2 doses of vaccination, Covid-19 booster vaccination dose is recommended after 6 months from the disease onset date.
- Advise strictly to follow the COMIRNATY, Covid 19 mRNA (Nucleoside modified -Pfizer BNT) vaccination guidelines issued on 05/07/2021 by the Epidemiology Unit, Ministry of Health find in www.epid.gov.lk for vaccine storage, vial preparation, administration, clinic preparation, follow up and surveillance of Adverse Events Following Immunization (AEFI). Only deviation is administration of a single dose.
- Further, advise to follow the additional guidance given under the even number issued on 30/10/2021 for the booster dose from Pfizer vaccines as given below;
- Advise to use the same consent form for adult Covid-19 vaccination.

- Each vial of COMIRNATY, Covid 19 mRNA (Nucleoside modified -Pfizer BNT) has **6 doses** to vaccinate eligible individuals (follow the guidelines issued on 05/07/2021 by the Epidemiology Unit, Ministry of Health).
- All hospital Directors and MOOH are advised to ensure opening a vaccine vial in the presence of 6 persons to minimize the wastage.
- It is advised to request minimum required vaccine stocks with the plan to get down additional stocks as with the requirement to minimize the wastage.
- The vaccines taken out from the Ultra-Low Temperature (ULT) freezer (from -70°C) will not be able to re-freeze in ULT freezer.
- **Vaccines supplied to the RMSD, MOH offices and hospitals should be stored only in the $2^{\circ}\text{-}8^{\circ}\text{C}$ in the Ice Lined Refrigerator (ILR), adhering to the national vaccine storage guidelines issued by the Epidemiology Unit.**
- **Even though ULT freezer (-70°C) facilities available in anywhere in any districts, Comirnaty-Pfizer vaccine issued after the Epidemiology Unit cold stores should not be stored at ULT freezer (-70°C) as it is transported in $2^{\circ}\text{-}8^{\circ}\text{C}$.**
- Need to maintain regular communications with the Consultant Epidemiologists at the Epidemiology Unit, Provincial and District Consultant Community Physicians and Regional Epidemiologists in respective districts on the vaccination process to receive required vaccine supply and technical guidance to ensure minimum wastage, storage and achieving maximum coverage for the booster dose.
- MOOH and hospital directors/ responsible focal persons in the hospital are responsible for the vaccine stock management to minimize the wastage:
 - All COMIRNATY, Covid 19 mRNA (Nucleoside modified -Pfizer BNT) vaccine stocks receiving to the MOH office or hospital **need to be stored in the ILR/refrigerator, marked clearly and stored separately according to the date that vaccines are taken out from the ULT stores. Vaccines supplied as stocks on dates taken out from ULT stores, will be expired in 30 days after taking out from the ULT (even though the vaccine vial expiry date is a different future date).**
 - Need to closely monitor until complete the vaccination from initial supply of vaccines, on **"1st- received-1st- use"** basis to ensure all received vaccines will be used within 28 days from the receipt date (at MOH and at hospitals).
 - Should not keep vaccines until 28 days without utilized and in 14 days of the receipt need to identify whether there are any excess vaccine doses remaining. In such situations, required to communicate with the Regional Epidemiologist in the district and with Consultant Epidemiologists at the Epidemiology Unit immediately for required redistributions without delay.
 - If any remaining unopened vials are returned after the clinic session, need to store it separately in a **"return unopen vaccine vial container"**, separately labelled and stored **in the ILR and need to first use returned unopened vials first on the next vaccination day.**

- Regional Epidemiologists are advised to closely monitor,
 - COMIRNATY, Covid 19 mRNA (Nucleoside modified -Pfizer BNT) vaccine stocks at the RMSD and should not exceed >30 days on receiving vaccines supplied at one lot (which are taken out from the ULT).
 - On receiving vaccines at different dates, the date received based on the vaccines taken out from the ULT, needs to be clearly labelled, stocks taken out from the ULT on separate dates need to be separately stored and should not request additional vaccine stocks until district vaccine stocks distributed to MOH offices and hospitals are used within 30 days of receipt to the RMSD from the Epidemiology Unit.
 - Option of re-distribution of vaccines within institutions needs to be considered at all instances before re-order vaccines from the main stores of the Epidemiology Unit.
- Advise strictly to adhere to all the precautions and vaccination principles in conducting vaccination clinics.
 - Eligibility screening needs to be done by a Medical Officer.
 - Emergency tray with all essential medicines is advised to be ready at all times and advised to check at every morning according to the guidelines given by the Epidemiology Unit.
 - Transport arrangements to nearest hospital needs to be planned and ready to be used in any emergency AEFI situation after the initial management.
 - Adhere to all infection prevention precautions to ensure protection from Covid-19 during vaccination sessions.

Need to deploy adequate trained and competent staff for vaccination (vaccine vial preparation and vaccination): refer to the poster attached for relevant steps of vaccine vial preparation (Annexure 1) and videos available at the google drive (<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1kvudLAUbxNKv3Gmt5mnjkckibrJFXM5h?usp=sharing>) shared through emails.

Identify vaccination data entry teams to deploy at the vaccination centre, MOH office and hospitals to enter vaccination data in to the vaccine tracker.

At the end of each day, total number vaccinated needs to be provided to the Epidemiology Unit, copying to Regional Epidemiologist in respective districts.

If you need any further clarification, please contact the Chief Epidemiologist of the Epidemiology Unit. Additional resource materials can find on the website www.epid.gov.lk.

Thank you,



Dr. Asela Gunawardena

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Dr. ASELA GUNAWARDENA
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Cc:

- i. Hon. Minister of Health
- ii. Secretary, Ministry of Health
- iii. Additional Secretary (Public Health Services)
- iv. Deputy Director General (PHS) -1
- v. Chief Epidemiologist
- vi. Provincial and district CCPs
- vii. Regional Epidemiologists
- viii. MOO/MCH