

## Briefing for the Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee on petition [PE2072](#): Offer COVID-19 vaccine boosters to teachers and school staff, lodged by Peter Barlow.

### Background

The Scottish Government policy on COVID-19 vaccination is set out in a [letter from the Chief Medical Officer](#) which was published on 9 September 2023.

This letter details eligibility for the 2023 programme of winter vaccinations for both influenza and COVID-19. The objectives of the programme are set out as:

1. To protect those in society who continue to be more at-risk of severe COVID-19 and flu.
2. To increase immunity in those at higher risk of severe COVID-19 and flu during winter 2023, to prevent severe illness, hospitalisation and death.
3. To focus on a co-administration model, offering flu and COVID-19 vaccinations at the same appointment where possible.

The letter is based on [advice from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation](#) (JCVI) and recommends a COVID-19 booster to the following groups:

- Residents and staff in care homes for older adults
- Those aged 65 years and over
- Those aged 6 months to 64 years in a clinical risk group, as defined in tables 3 and 4 of the COVID-19 chapter of [the Green Book](#)
- Frontline health and social care workers (HSCWs)
- Those aged 12 to 64 years who are household contacts, as defined in [the Green Book](#), of people with immunosuppression
- Those aged 16 to 64 years who are carers, as defined in [the Green Book](#)
- Pregnant women

Therefore, unless a member of teaching or school staff falls into one of the above categories, they will not automatically be eligible for a COVID-19 vaccination.

The JCVI recently published its advice on the spring booster programme. It recommends that a vaccine should be offered to:

- adults aged 75 years and over
- residents in a care home for older adults
- individuals aged 6 months and over who are immunosuppressed (as defined in tables 3 or 4 in the [COVID-19 chapter of the Green Book](#))

At the time of writing, the Scottish Government has yet to respond to the advice.

### **Scottish Government Action**

The Scottish Government has instructed NHS Boards to administer the vaccination programme in accordance with the advice from the JCVI and the Chief Medical Officer.

### **Scottish Parliament Action**

The Scottish Parliament has not undertaken any work on the eligibility for COVID-19 vaccination.

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**27 January 2024**