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சுகாதார அமைச்சு
Ministry of Health

මගේ අංකය) EPID/400/n-CoV/Vaccine
எனது இல)
My No.)

මගේ අංකය)
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Your No.)

දිනය)
திகதி) 2022/5/5
Date)

DDG-NHSL, NH Kandy
Directors of all hospitals,
Provincial Directors of Health Services
Regional Directors of Health Service

Provision of booster dose for immunocompromised and highly vulnerable comorbid individuals with possible immune suppression, 20 years and above, after 3 months from the 3rd dose : COMIRNATY - Covid 19 mRNA (Nucleoside modified -Pfizer BNT) vaccination campaign, from 05/05//2022

The Ministry of Health has taken the decision to provide a booster vaccination, immunocompromised and highly vulnerable comorbid individuals, aged 20 years and above, with possible immune suppression, after 3 months from the 3rd dose, from 05/05/2022.

- The advice to provide the 3rd primary dose for identified categories, on elapsing 1 month from the 2nd dose, has been given on 19/11/2021, under the same even number (EPID/400/n-CoV/Vaccine).
- The categories identified eligible for the 3rd primary dose were as follows and would be the same for the booster vaccination dose.
 - Immunocompromised patients due to disease or treatment
 - Patients with chronic kidney disease
 - Solid organ, bone marrow or stem cell transplant recipients
 - Patients with cancer whether on treatment or not
 - Those with asplenia and splenic dysfunction
 - Patients with any other immunosuppressed state on the recommendation or referral from the treating physician
- The vaccine for the booster dose campaign for above categories will be the “COMIRNATY” - Covid 19 mRNA Vaccine (Nucleoside modified -Pfizer BNT).
- It is advised to provide a dose for eligible categories, for those who have completed 3 primary doses, and the time elapsed 3 month from the 3rd primary vaccination dose
- Advise to identify and vaccinate all eligible above-mentioned categories, 20 years and above age group in all MOH areas, medical/ surgical/ oncological/immunological/other clinic attendees and OPD attendees.
 - Deploy all public health staff to identify eligible 20 years and above category on house-to-house identification to ensure all eligible categories are informed and provided the booster vaccination dose.
 - At the same time, if any defaulters for the primary dose/s, needs to be provided the missed dose at the earliest possible.

- 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, prepare, follow up and surveillance of Adverse Events Following Immunization(AEFI). (Only deviation is administration of a single dose).
- 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).
- It is advised to manage vaccine stocks with the plan to get down additional stocks as with the requirement ensure all required categories provide the vaccination on their first contact.
- The vaccines taken out from the Ultra-Low Temperature (ULT) freezer (from -70⁰C) 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 2⁰-8⁰C in the Ice Lined Refrigerator (ILR), adhering to the national vaccine storage guidelines issued by the Epidemiology Unit.**
- **Even though ULT freezer (-70⁰C) facilities available in anywhere in any districts, Comirnaty-Pfizer vaccine issued after the Epidemiology Unit cold stores should not be stored at ULT freezer (-70⁰C) as it is transported in 2⁰-8⁰C.**
- 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 proper storage and achieving maximum coverage for booster doses.
- MOOH and hospital directors/ responsible focal persons in the hospital are responsible for the vaccine stock management to ensure proper supply of vaccines:
 - 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 received date, as separate supplied stocks 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.

- On receiving vaccines at different dates, the date received needs to be clearly labelled, stocks on separate dates need to be separately stored.
- 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
Director General of Health Services

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. Director/MCH/FHB
- vii. Provincial and district CCPs
- viii. Regional Epidemiologists
- ix. MOO/MCH

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