

**From the Chief Medical Officer  
Prof Sir Michael McBride**



Department of  
**Health**

An Roinn Sláinte

Mánnystrie O Poustie

[www.health-ni.gov.uk](http://www.health-ni.gov.uk)

**HSS(MD) 52/2021**

**FOR ACTION**

Chief Executives HSC Trusts

*for onward cascade to Medical Directors, and Trust  
Vaccine Leads*

Chief Executive, Public Health Agency and Health and  
Social Care Board/NIAS *for onward cascade as  
appropriate*

Assistant Director of General Medical Services, Health  
and Social Care Board *for onward cascade to All General  
Practitioners, GP Locums and Practice Staff  
OOHs Medical Managers*

Assistant Director of Pharmacy and Medicines  
Management, Health and Social Care Board *for onward  
cascade to Community Pharmacies*

Castle Buildings  
Stormont Estate  
BELFAST  
BT4 3SQ

Tel: 028 9052 0563

Email: [Michael.McBride@health-ni.gov.uk](mailto:Michael.McBride@health-ni.gov.uk)

Our Ref: HSS(MD) 52/2021

Date: 30 July 2021

**PLEASE SEE ATTACHED FULL CIRCULATION LIST**

Dear Colleague

**CHANGE OF DOSE INTERVAL BETWEEN THE PFIZER-BIONTECH AND  
MODERNA COVID-19 VACCINES**

1. Further to our letter of the 10 June, HSS(MD) 39/2021, we are writing to you to advise that, we are recommending that the current dose intervals between the Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines should be extended from 6 weeks to 8 weeks.
2. This is based on updated advice from the independent experts at the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) who have suggested that the optimal interval dosage between COVID-19 vaccines should be 8 weeks.
3. No change of schedule is required for the AstraZeneca vaccine as it currently stands at 8 weeks.
4. **From the 1 August**, the dose interval between COVID-19 vaccines will now be as follows:

- Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine – dose interval should be 8 weeks;
  - Moderna vaccine - dose should be 8 weeks;
  - AstraZeneca Vaccine – dose interval should be 8 weeks.
5. For those who have already received their first dose, scheduled appointments for second doses should remain unaffected.
6. Thank you for your continued efforts and, as ever, we are hugely grateful for everything that you are doing to make the HSC-delivery of this programme the success that it is.

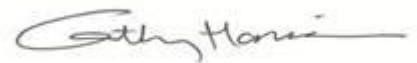
Yours sincerely



**Prof Sir Michael McBride**  
Chief Medical Officer



**Prof Charlotte McArdle**  
Chief Nursing Officer



**Mrs Cathy Harrison**  
Chief Pharmaceutical Officer

### Circulation List

Director of Public Health/Medical Director, Public Health Agency (*for onward distribution to all relevant health protection staff*)

Director of Nursing, Public Health Agency

Directors of Pharmacy HSC Trusts

Director of Social Care and Children, HSCB

Family Practitioner Service Leads, Health and Social Care Board (*for cascade to GP Out of Hours services*)

Medical Directors, HSC Trusts (*for onward distribution to all Consultants, Occupational Health Physicians and School Medical Leads*)

Nursing Directors, HSC Trusts (*for onward distribution to all Community Nurses, and Midwives*)

Directors of Children's Services, HSC Trusts

RQIA (*for onward transmission to all independent providers including independent hospitals*)

Medicines Management Pharmacists, HSC Board (*for cascade to prescribing advisers*)

Regional Medicines Information Service, Belfast HSC Trust

Regional Pharmaceutical Procurement Service, Northern HSC Trust

Professor Donna Fitzsimons, Head of School of Nursing and Midwifery QUB

Professor Sonja McIlpatrick, Head of School of Nursing, University of Ulster

Caroline Lee, CEC

Donna Gallagher, Open University

Professor Paul McCarron, Head of School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, UU

Professor Colin McCoy, Head of School, School of Pharmacy, QUB

Professor Colin Adair, Director of the NI Centre for Pharmacy Learning and Development, QUB  
Donncha O'Carolan, HSCB (*for distribution to all General Dental Practitioners*)  
Raymond Curran, Head of Ophthalmic Services, HSCB (*for distribution to Community Optometrists*)  
Trade Union Side  
Clinical Advisory Team  
Louise McMahon, Director of Integrated Care, HSCB

This letter is available on the Department of Health website at  
<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/topics/professional-medical-and-environmental-health-advice/hssmd-letters-and-urgent-communications>