



UK Health  
Security  
Agency

# COVID-19 vaccinator competency assessment tool

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## Document information

Date	Details
27 November 2020	Document created
6 December 2020	Document updated to include recommendation that experienced vaccinators should use this tool to self-assess knowledge and competency.
15 March 2021	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Additional column added so that vaccinators can be assessed or self-assess for the different types of COVID-19 vaccine.</li> <li>2. Two new specific competencies for knowledge of dilution and vaccine volume required added.</li> </ol>
17 October 2022	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Content transferred to UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) document format and branding and references to PHE changed to UKHSA.</li> <li>2. Assessment tool expanded to allow recording of completed e-learning Core Knowledge module and assessment (or equivalent other training).</li> <li>3. Vaccine names updated in line with currently available supplies.</li> </ol>
3 October 2024	Removed vaccine product names

## COVID-19 vaccinator competency assessment tool

With the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic continuing to cause hundreds of infections and between one and two hundred deaths across the UK every week, it remains crucial that the COVID-19 vaccines are safely and effectively delivered to as many of those eligible as possible. This requires knowledgeable, confident and competent vaccinators. It is therefore vital that anyone administering the vaccine is given the time and opportunity to undertake the comprehensive training they need and that they are supervised and supported in practice as required.

## Supervision and assessment of competency

A period of supervised practice to allow observation of, and development of skills in vaccine administration and application of knowledge to practice is essential. Supervision for new vaccinators and support for all vaccinators is critical to the safe and successful delivery of the

COVID-19 immunisation programme. The supervisor must be a registered, appropriately trained, experienced and knowledgeable practitioner in immunisation.

All new vaccinators, and those returning to vaccination after a prolonged interval, should complete this competency assessment for formal evaluation and sign-off of their clinical competency. They should be supervised administering the vaccine until both they, and their supervisor or trainer, feel confident that they have the necessary knowledge and skills to administer vaccines safely and competently.

Experienced vaccinators should use this competency tool to self-assess that they are able to meet all the competencies listed and confirm that they have the knowledge and skills necessary to administer COVID-19 vaccine. This will be required to work to the COVID-19 PGDs and Protocols.

Once signed and dated, all vaccinators should retain the competency tool in their training records.

The competency assessment tool has been divided into 3 areas:

1. Knowledge.
2. Core clinical skills.
3. The clinical process and procedure for COVID-19 vaccine administration.

Vaccinators should be assessed against the competencies relevant to the role assigned to them. It is recognised that not all competencies will be relevant to all staff, for example if they have been assigned a role in vaccine administration only and are not responsible for assessing suitability for vaccination and taking consent. Some competencies may also only be applicable to registered staff. However, competencies that have been marked as 'not applicable' but which become applicable if the vaccinator is given additional responsibilities or a change in role, can be assessed at a later date without having to complete a whole new competency tool. Multiple supervisors may sign off competency where required (for example, if not all competencies can be assessed at one time) and additional competencies can be added if necessary.

## How to use the competency assessment tool

The assessment tool can be used as a self-assessment tool, an assessment tool for use with a supervisor or both, depending on the previous experience of the vaccinator. Where a particular competency is not applicable to the individual's role at the time of assessment, indicate 'not applicable' (NA).

The vaccinator should complete the self-assessment column and then, if they are new to vaccination, or returning to vaccination after a prolonged interval, share it with their supervisor or assessor.

As the different types of COVID-19 vaccine have some important differences between them (for example, the vaccine components, how they should be stored and prepared, the dosage and so on), a column has been added so that vaccinators can add the name of the vaccine they are being assessed or self-assessing for and sign against each individual type of COVID-19 vaccine. Where the competence applies to all of the vaccines (for example management of anaphylaxis, intramuscular injection technique), individual assessment of competency for each vaccine is not required.

The supervisor carrying out the assessment should:

- review the vaccinator's self-assessment, discussing any areas that are identified as 'need to improve' and the relevant action plans
- observe their performance as they provide vaccinations or advice to several patients and indicate whether each competency is 'met' or 'needs to improve' in the supervisor review column
- if improvement is needed, help the vaccinator to develop an action plan that will enable them to achieve the required level of competence and plan a further assessment
- acknowledge if they and/or the vaccinator decide that they are not suitable for the role and communicate this to the employer

When the supervisor and vaccinator agree that the vaccinator is competent in all the relevant areas, they should both sign the section at the bottom of the assessment.

**Part 1. Knowledge**

Competency assessment tool for health care workers administering the COVID-19 vaccines		Name of COVID-19 vaccine assessed for (where separate assessment for each vaccine is recommended)	Not applicable to role assigned (NA)	Self-assessment Record: met (M) or needs to improve (NI) (initial and date)	Supervisor review Record: met (M) or needs to improve (NI) (initial and date)
<b>1a</b>	Can provide evidence of completion of the COVID-19 vaccine e-learning Core Knowledge session or attendance at a specific, comprehensive COVID-19 vaccine training course, in line with the <a href="#">UKHSA COVID-19 vaccinator training requirements</a> .	Applies to all of the vaccines			
<b>1b</b>	With reference to 1a, has successfully completed and passed an assessment which assesses core COVID-19 vaccine knowledge, either the e-learning COVID-19 vaccine Core Knowledge assessment or an end-of-course test.	Applies to all of the vaccines			
<b>1c</b>	Can provide evidence of completion of the COVID-19 vaccine-specific e-learning sessions or attendance at a comprehensive COVID-19 vaccine training course where specific training about the individual COVID-19 vaccine(s) was provided.  Add the names of specific vaccines as required.				

Competency assessment tool for health care workers administering the COVID-19 vaccines		Name of COVID-19 vaccine assessed for (where separate assessment for each vaccine is recommended)	Not applicable to role assigned (NA)	Self-assessment Record: met (M) or needs to improve (NI) (initial and date)	Supervisor review Record: met (M) or needs to improve (NI) (initial and date)
<b>1d</b>	Has successfully completed and passed a knowledge assessment of the vaccine(s) they will be giving– either the vaccine-specific e-learning course assessment(s) or an end-of-course test.  Add the names of specific vaccines as required.				
<b>1e</b>	Able to access the online Green Book and other relevant COVID-19 vaccine guidance, for example, DHSC/UKHSA/NHSE letters (or Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland equivalents), JCVI statements, Vaccine Update, UKHSA Information for Healthcare Practitioners on the COVID-19 vaccine programme document, COVID-19 vaccine PGD and Protocol, and so on.	Applies to all of the vaccines			
<b>1f</b>	Knows who to contact for advice if unsure about issues such as eligibility for vaccination or action to take if a vaccine error occurs.	Applies to all of the vaccines			

Competency assessment tool for health care workers administering the COVID-19 vaccines		Name of COVID-19 vaccine assessed for (where separate assessment for each vaccine is recommended)	Not applicable to role assigned (NA)	Self-assessment Record: met (M) or needs to improve (NI) (initial and date)	Supervisor review Record: met (M) or needs to improve (NI) (initial and date)
1g	Able to explain the basics of how the vaccine works, what it contains and why, how it has been trialled, any contraindications or precautions and possible side effects and how to treat them.  Add the names of specific vaccines as required				



**Part 2. Core skills for vaccination**

	<b>Competency assessment tool for health care workers administering the COVID-19 vaccines</b>	<b>Name of COVID-19 vaccine</b>	<b>Not applicable to role</b>	<b>Self-assessment</b>	<b>Supervisor review</b>
<b>2a</b>	Is up to date with requirements for anaphylaxis and basic life support (BLS) training (has undertaken within past year or as per employers' stipulations).	Applies to all of the vaccines			
<b>2b</b>	Aware of how to respond to an immediate serious adverse event following vaccination and knows the whereabouts of anaphylaxis and emergency care equipment and how and when to use it.	Applies to all of the vaccines			
<b>2c</b>	Can explain incident response and reporting process in case of a procedural error, needlestick injury, breach of infection control measure and so on, as per local protocol.	Applies to all of the vaccines			
<b>2d</b>	Knows how to put on and take off personal protective equipment (PPE) as required and demonstrates good practice in infection prevention and control. Uses appropriate aseptic technique when preparing vaccines and handling injection equipment (for example, syringes, needles) to prevent contamination and infection.	Applies to all of the vaccines			
<b>2e</b>	Disposes of sharps, vaccine syringes and vials and other vaccine equipment safely in line with local protocol.	Applies to all of the vaccines			
<b>2f</b>	Demonstrates knowledge and understanding of the rationale for and importance of maintaining the vaccine cold chain. Familiar with local protocols for cold chain management and the action to be taken in case of cold chain failure and who to contact.	Applies to all of the vaccines			

**Part 3. Clinical process and procedure**

		<b>Name of COVID-19 vaccine</b>	<b>Not applicable to role</b>	<b>Self-assessment</b>	<b>Supervisor review</b>
<b>3a</b>	Checks patient's identity and patient's records prior to vaccination to ascertain suitability for COVID-19 vaccination.	Applies to all of the vaccines			
<b>3b</b>	Able to answer patient or carer questions, referring to leaflets to aid explanations or discussion as appropriate, and using interpreter if necessary to ensure patient or carer is informed. Knows who to refer to/ contact if further detail/advice is required.	Applies to all of the vaccines			
<b>3c</b>	Able to clearly and confidently discuss the benefits and risks of COVID-19 vaccination and able to address any concerns patients and/or carers may have.	Applies to all of the vaccines			
<b>3d</b>	Demonstrates knowledge of consent requirements and any relevant issues such as the capacity to consent and Mental Capacity Act. Ensures consent is obtained prior to vaccination and is appropriately documented.	Applies to all of the vaccines			
<b>3e</b>	Demonstrates knowledge and understanding of contraindications and precautions for the COVID-19 vaccines and is able to assess appropriately for these, or, if necessary, the need to postpone vaccination.  Add the names of specific vaccines as required.				

3f	Checks that there is an appropriate legal authority to supply and administer the vaccine such as: they are an appropriate prescriber, vaccine has been prescribed to a specific patient via a Patient Specific Direction, or the vaccinator is authorised to administer the vaccine in accordance with a Patient Group Direction (PGD) or national Protocol.	Applies to all of the vaccines		
3g	Checks the presentation of the COVID-19 vaccine, the expiry date, how it has been stored prior to use and prepares it according to the vaccine manufacturer's instructions.  Add the names of specific vaccines as required			
3h	Knows which COVID-19 vaccines require dilution, which diluent should be used, volume of diluent required and demonstrates correct technique to dilute vaccine.  Add the names of specific vaccines as required			

<b>3i</b>	<p>Able to state correct dose, depending on vaccine type, and draw it up accurately.</p> <p>Add the names of specific vaccines as required.</p>			
<b>3j</b>	Positions patient appropriately and chooses appropriate vaccination site that is, use of deltoid muscle in upper arm (or anterior lateral aspect of the thigh where there is insufficient muscle mass in deltoid muscle or deltoid muscle is otherwise unsuitable).	Applies to all of the vaccines		
<b>3k</b>	Demonstrates correct intramuscular injection technique.	Applies to all of the vaccines		
<b>3l</b>	Demonstrates an understanding of procedure for the reporting of any vaccine reactions and knows how to report using the MHRA's Yellow Card Scheme.	Applies to all of the vaccines		
<b>3m</b>	Completes all necessary documentation, recording type and product name of vaccine, batch number, expiry date, dose administered, site used, date given and name and signature.	Applies to all of the vaccines		
<b>3n</b>	Demonstrates good record keeping and understands the importance of making sure vaccine information is recorded on relevant data systems.	Applies to all of the vaccines		

<b>3o</b>	<p>Advises patient or carer on what to expect after vaccination as appropriate (for example, local injection site reactions, fever) and management of these.</p> <p>Provides patient or carer with a copy of post-immunisation advice sheet or the product's Patient Information Leaflet if appropriate.</p>	Applies to all of the vaccines			
<b>3p</b>	<p>Understands individual limitations and knows where to refer patients where there may be more complex requirements or a more experienced vaccinator is required.</p>	Applies to all of the vaccines			

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**Action plan**

(Record any actions required to meet any competencies assessed as 'needs to improve'. Sign and date these once met)

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UKHSA is responsible for protecting every member of every community from the impact of infectious diseases, chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear incidents and other health threats. We provide intellectual, scientific and operational leadership at national and local level, as well as on the global stage, to make the nation health secure.

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Prepared by: Immunisation and Vaccine-Preventable Diseases Division

For queries relating to this document, please contact:

[immunisation@ukhsa.gov.uk](mailto:immunisation@ukhsa.gov.uk)

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