

19-21 Broad Street | St Helier  
Jersey | JE2 3RR

Deputy Mary Le Hegarat  
Chair  
Health and Social Security Scrutiny Panel

By Email

18 December 2020

Dear Deputy Le Hegarat

### COVID-19 Vaccine Delivery

Thank you for your letter of 14 December requesting further information on a number of vaccine-related matters. I respond to each of your questions below.

1. The vaccine (which is supplied as a container of 195 vials, each containing 5 doses giving a total of 975 doses per container) is received by the hospital pharmacy department having been transported under dry ice at  $-70^{\circ}\text{C}$ . It is carefully removed from the shipping container and transferred to an ultra-low temperature freezer located within the pharmacy department where it is stored at  $-70^{\circ}\text{C}$ . When the vaccine is required, the pharmacy team remove the container of 195 vials from the ultra-low temperature freezer and transfer it to a walk-in refrigerator where it is allowed to defrost for 3 hours as per the manufacturer's recommendations. It is then repackaged in the fridge by the pharmacy team into appropriate quantities for each care home. These are then placed in a vaccine porter (a pharmaceutical grade cool box) so that the vaccine is maintained at a temperature of between  $2^{\circ}\text{C}$  and  $8^{\circ}\text{C}$  while it is being transported to the care home. A temperature monitor is included in the vaccine porter which is returned to the pharmacy where the data is downloaded to confirm that the vaccine has been maintained at the correct temperature throughout transportation.

Only the pharmacy team handles the frozen vaccine. At no point does frozen vaccine leave the pharmacy department. Attached are the relevant pharmacy standard operating procedures.

2. We are working with the UK Department of Health and Social Care and our current information is that we will aim to vaccinate week commencing 21<sup>st</sup> December, 28<sup>th</sup> December and 4<sup>th</sup> January. This is subject to change.
3. The first batch of 975 doses was received by the hospital pharmacy on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> December. A second consignment of 1950 doses (2 x 975) was received on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> December. A further consignment is expected w/c 21<sup>st</sup> December. Because of

the fragile nature of the vaccine, a full container of 975 doses must be defrosted at the same time. It is not possible to remove (for example) 500 doses from the container and defrost these separately and then defrost the remainder of the container 3 weeks later. In addition, once the vaccine is removed from the freezer it must be used within 120 hours, meaning that careful planning is required in order to ensure that as close to 975 doses as possible can be administered within the 120-hour expiry.

4. The Vaccine Damage Payment Scheme does not apply in Jersey and Jersey has no equivalent scheme currently.

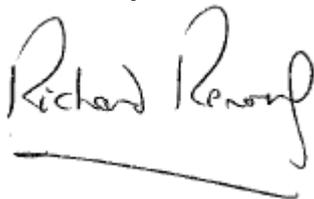
In the event that the COVID-19 vaccine results in a Jersey resident suffering any kind of injury as a result of unforeseen side effects of the vaccine (rather than negligent administration of the vaccine itself) then it is possible that a claim would be made against the Government of Jersey as well as the manufacturer or supplier of the vaccine.

If the Government of Jersey is sued in such circumstances the Government would seek to pass on such a claim to the UK Government in accordance with an indemnity received from the UK Government.

The claim would be dealt with and damages assessed in the same way as for any other personal injury claim where the payment is not fixed but is assessed by reference to the nature of the injury and the consequences for the individual.

5. The Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) temporary authorisation for the Pfizer Covid vaccine does not exclude Downs Syndrome, the elderly or pre-existing conditions ([MHRA Temporary Authorisation](#)). The local Clinical Protocol and Patient Group Direction follow the temporary authorisation issued by the UK medicines regulator. The MHRA temporary authorisation and Patient Group Direction stipulate that the vaccine can be offered to everyone over 16 years. Only those who are pregnant or breast feeding and, as a precautionary measure, those who have a history of anaphylaxis, have had a severe reaction to any medicine, vaccines or food requiring hospitalisation, or who carry an adrenaline pen will be excluded from the programme. The mobile unit has access to EMIS (patient records) if there was a concern.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard Renouf". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line underneath.

Deputy Richard Renouf  
Minister for Health and Social Services