



Public Health
England

Protecting and improving the nation's health

COVID-19 vaccinator competency assessment tool

About Public Health England

Public Health England exists to protect and improve the nation's health and wellbeing, and reduce health inequalities. We do this through world-leading science, knowledge and intelligence, advocacy, partnerships and the delivery of specialist public health services. We are an executive agency of the Department of Health, and are a distinct delivery organisation with operational autonomy to advise and support government, local authorities and the NHS in a professionally independent manner.

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Contents

About Public Health England	2
COVID-19 vaccinator competency assessment tool	4
Supervision and assessment of competency	4
How to use the competency assessment tool	5

COVID-19 vaccinator competency assessment tool

With the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic continuing to cause millions of infections and over a million deaths across the world, it is crucial that the COVID-19 vaccines are safely and effectively delivered to as many of those eligible as possible. This will require knowledgeable, confident and competent immunisers. 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 immunisers and support for all immunisers 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 immunisers, and those returning to immunisation 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.

The competency assessment tool has been divided into three areas:

1. knowledge
2. core clinical skills
3. the clinical process/procedure for COVID-19 vaccine administration

Immunisers 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. 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 immuniser. Where a particular competency is not applicable to the individual's role, indicate 'not applicable' (NA).

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

The supervisor carrying out the assessment should:

- review the immuniser's self-assessment, discussing any areas that are identified as 'need to improve' and the relevant action plans
- observe their performance as they provide immunisations/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 immuniser 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 immuniser decide that they are not suitable for the role and communicate this to the employer

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

	Competency assessment tool for health care workers administering COVID-19 vaccine	Not applicable to role assigned (NA)	Self-assessment Record: met (M) or needs to improve (NI) (initial & date)	Supervisor review Record: met (M) or needs to improve (NI) (initial & date)	Record action plan for any assessed as 'needs to improve' (as agreed with supervisor)
	Part 1: Knowledge		Self-Assessment	Supervisor review	
1a	Can provide evidence of completion of the COVID-19 vaccine e-learning programme or attendance at a specific, comprehensive COVID-19 vaccine training course.				
1b	Has successfully completed and passed a knowledge assessment – either the e-learning course assessment or an end of course test.				
1c	Able to access the online Green Book and other relevant COVID-19 vaccine guidance e.g. DHSC/PHE/NHS E&I letters (or Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland equivalents), Vaccine Update, PHE Information for Healthcare Practitioners on the COVID-19 vaccine programme document, COVID-19 vaccine PGD and Protocol, etc				
1d	Knows who to contact for advice if unsure about issues such as eligibility for vaccination or action to take if a vaccine error occurs.				
1e	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.				

	Part 2: Core Skills for immunisation	Not applicable to role	Self-Assessment	Supervisor review	Record action plan for any assessed as 'needs to improve'
2a	Is up to date with requirements for anaphylaxis and basic life support (BLS) training (has undertaken within past year or as per employers' stipulations).				
2b	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.				
2c	Can explain incident response and reporting process in case of a procedural error, needlestick injury, breach of infection control measure, etc. as per local protocol.				
2d	Knows how to put on and take off personal protective equipment (PPE) as required and demonstrates good practice in infection prevention and control. Uses aseptic technique when preparing vaccines and handling injection equipment (e.g. syringes, needles) to prevent contamination and infection.				
2e	Disposes of sharps, vaccine syringes and vials and other vaccine equipment safely in line with local protocol.				
2f	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.				
	Part 3: Clinical process and procedure	Not applicable to role	Self-Assessment	Supervisor review	Record action plan for any assessed as 'needs to improve' (as agreed with supervisor)
3a	Checks patient's identity and patient's records prior to vaccination to ascertain suitability for COVID-19 vaccination.				

COVID-19 vaccinator competency assessment tool

3b	Able to answer patient/carer questions, referring to leaflets to aid explanations/discussion as appropriate and using interpreter if necessary to ensure patient/carer informed. Knows who to refer to or who to contact if further detail or advice is required.				
3c	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.				
3d	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.				
3e	Demonstrates knowledge and understanding of contraindications and precautions to COVID-19 vaccine and is able to assess appropriately for these, or, if necessary, the need to postpone vaccination.				
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.				
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.				
3h	Positions patient appropriately and chooses appropriate vaccination site i.e. 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).				
3i	Demonstrates correct intramuscular injection technique.				

3j	Demonstrates an understanding of procedure for the reporting of any vaccine reactions and knows how to report using the MHRA's Coronavirus Yellow Card Scheme.				
3k	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.				
3l	Demonstrates good record keeping and understands the importance of making sure vaccine information is recorded on relevant data system(s)				
3m	Advises patient/carer on what to expect after vaccination as appropriate (e.g. local injection site reactions, fever) and management of these. Provides patient/carer with a copy of post-immunisation advice sheet or the product's Patient Information Leaflet if appropriate.				
3n	Understands individual limitations and knows where to refer patients where there may be more complex requirements or a more experienced vaccinator is required.				
Statement of competence					
<p>Name of individual:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>has shown appropriate knowledge, skill and competence to safely administer and/or assess suitability for COVID-19 vaccination.</p> <p>State name(s) of COVID-19 vaccine assessed for: _____</p> <p>_____</p>		<p>Signature:</p>			
<p>Name of supervisor carrying out assessment:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Role/job title:</p> <p>_____</p>					