

Chief Medical Officer responds to JCVI advice on use of Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine

The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) has issued advice to the UK government on the use of the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine for people aged under 40 and indicated a preference for adults aged 30 to 39 without underlying health conditions to receive an alternative to the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine – where available and only if this does not cause substantial delays in being vaccinated.

Responding to the latest advice Scotland's Chief Medical Officer Dr Gregor Smith said: "The clear scientific evidence and advice continues to be that the benefits of receiving the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine far outweigh the risks for most age groups because it provides protection against the harm from COVID-19.



Waiting area outside the main entrance to the coronavirus mass vaccine centre at the Edinburgh International Conference Centre. Picture date: Monday February 1, 2021. PHOTO: Jane Barlow/PA Wire

"The Scottish Government will continue to follow the advice

from the JCVI, and make full use of the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines for all adults aged 30-39, without underlying health conditions, while continuing to use Oxford/AstraZeneca when it is appropriate to do so.

“The JCVI has made clear that the new advice for this age group is based on the current low prevalence of the virus and the availability of alternatives to the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine. If the situation changes the advice is that vaccination of adults aged 30-39 years with any of the UK authorised vaccines is always better than no vaccination, except where there are specific contraindications.

“It remains crucial that everyone who is offered a vaccination takes up the offer. Everyone who has received their first dose of the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine safely should receive their second dose as this gives greater and longer lasting protection against the virus.

“Supplies permitting, we still expect to offer a first dose to all adults in Scotland by the end of July.”