Chief Medical Officer Directorate

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The Scottish Government

From the
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For action:
Practice Managers
Practice Nurses
General Practitioners
Directors of Public Health, NHS Boards
Directors of Nursing and Midwifery, NHS Boards
Primary Care leads, NHS Boards
Immunisation Co-ordinators
Consultants in Public Health Medicine
Health Visitors
Directors of Pharmacy, NHS Boards
Directors of Finance, NHS Boards
NHS Board Chief Executives

For information:
Scottish General Practitioners Committee
Health Protection Scotland
NHS 24
Infectious Disease Consultants
Consultant Paediatricians
Medical Directors, NHS Boards
Information Services Division

Enquiries to:
Policy Issues
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Pharmaceutical and vaccine supply issues
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Dear Colleague

CONTINUATION OF IMMUNISATION PROGRAMMES DURING COVID-19

1. As you will be fully aware, with the on-going COVID-19 outbreak NHS Boards and HSCPs are currently postponing various elective and non-urgent work to prioritise work related to this outbreak. The purpose of this letter is to inform you that immunisation programmes should not be classified as non-urgent work.

2. The immunisation schedules in the UK are based on the recommendation of the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) and careful consideration has been given on the timing of the vaccines to be given to protect people against serious infectious diseases, taking in to account the epidemiology of these infections. It is therefore important that vaccines are given on time as recommended by the schedule to maximise benefits by protecting people at a time of the greatest risk from these infections.

3. Vaccination programmes in Scotland bring great benefits to the whole of the population and it would not be possible without the ongoing support of those staff involved in the delivery of these programmes. We would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the extraordinary work to date of all NHS staff in responding to this global outbreak of COVID-19, and to thank all health staff for their continued hard work and dedication in responding to the increased pressure during this rapidly evolving situation.

Yours sincerely,

Catherine Calderwood	*Fiona McQueen*	*Rose Marie Parr*
Chief Medical Officer	**Chief Nursing Officer**	**Chief Pharmaceutical Officer**