



# Primary Care

## Vaccine Storage Fridge Policy

### Leighton Road Surgery

#### Document Control

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## 1. Introduction

Vaccines are biological substances that require proper temperature control to maintain their effectiveness and safety. It is crucial to ensure that vaccines are stored within the recommended temperature range during transport and storage. This policy outlines the guidelines for vaccine management at Leighton Road surgery sites, including the storage, receipt, and monitoring of vaccines.

## 2. Scope of Policy

This policy applies to all staff contracted to deliver services on behalf of NHS England at Leighton Road and Grovebury Road. It should be read in conjunction with the Green Book<sup>1</sup>, appropriate Patient Group Directions (PGDs), and Summary of Product Characteristics (SPCs) provided by manufacturers.

## 3. Receipt of Vaccine

Upon delivery, trained personnel should be nominated to receive vaccines. The designated person(s) should check the delivery against the order for any discrepancies, leakage, or damage before signing for them. The following information should be recorded:

- Vaccine type and brand
- Quantity
- Batch number and expiry date
- Date and time of receipt
- Name of person receiving goods

Vaccines must be kept in their original packaging and refrigerated immediately upon receipt, avoiding exposure to room temperature.

## 4. Storage of Vaccine

To ensure proper stock rotation, vaccines with the shortest expiry dates should be moved to the front of the refrigerator and used first. Regular stock checks should be conducted to remove expired vaccines. Where possible, vaccines should be stored in more than one fridge. All vaccination fridges must be kept locked within a locked room. A stock control log should be maintained to track orders, expiry dates, and running totals of vaccines. Vaccines should be stored in their original packaging at a temperature range of +2°C to +8°C, protected from light to prevent loss of potency.

## 5. Refrigerator

Temperature monitoring and recording should be conducted twice a week, documenting the maximum reading, minimum reading, and actual reading. The maximum and minimum functions must be reset after each temperature reading. Thermometers should be used to identify temperature deviations outside the recommended range. Even fridges with external electronic displays should have a data logger as a backup in case of built-in thermometer failure or power loss. Data should be downloaded and reviewed twice a week and kept as a log. The refrigerator door should be opened minimally to maintain a constant temperature. It is important to position refrigerators away from heat sources, ensuring proper ventilation and

airflow on all sides. All vaccines, being Prescription Only Medicines (POMs), must be stored under locked conditions. Vaccines should never be left unattended once removed from the refrigerator, and the fridge should be no more than 50% full to allow for proper air circulation. Precautions should be taken to prevent accidental interruption of the electricity supply, and the refrigerator should be cleaned according to the manufacturer's guidelines.

## **6. Data Logger and Best Practice**

A data logger should be used in conjunction with the refrigerator's built-in thermometer to monitor temperature. The data logger should be positioned in the middle of the refrigerator to provide an accurate reading. It is recommended to use a data logger that has a visual alarm to indicate temperature deviations outside the recommended range. Best practice suggests downloading the data from the data logger twice a week and reviewing it to identify any temperature fluctuations or anomalies. This will help in taking appropriate actions to address them and ensure the continuous integrity of the cold chain.

## **7. Disruption of Cold Chain**

In the event of a cold chain failure, appropriate actions should be taken to address the issue promptly and mitigate any potential impact on vaccine efficacy and safety. The following steps should be followed:

1. Check the temperature inside the fridge via the data loggers and try to ascertain how long it has been without power.
2. Remove all vaccines to another working refrigerator or storage box until you can confirm whether they can be used.
3. Do not use any vaccine that has been out of the cold chain until advice has been sought from the manufacturer.
4. Check the plug to ensure it hasn't been disconnected.
5. Inform the person designated to oversee all the refrigerators or a manager, in their absence, so that a repair engineer can be called.

If the manufacturer advises that the vaccines can be used, vaccines must be clearly marked and used first. Any stock that needs to be destroyed must be replaced with new stock. All failures need to be recorded on DATIX with the reasons for the failure and the actions taken.

## **8. Transporting Vaccines**

Suitable rigid containers should be used to reduce damage to vaccines during transit and maintain temperature. Domestic cool bags should not be used to store, distribute, or transport vaccines. Validated cool boxes (with maximum-minimum thermometers) and cool packs from a recognized medical supply company should be used. Vaccines should be kept in their original packaging and placed into a cool box with cool packs recommended by the manufacturers' instructions. The cool box must be insulated to prevent direct contact with the vaccines. The space within the container should be loosely filled to minimize circulating air.

## **9. Monitoring Arrangements**



The effectiveness of this policy and procedure will be reviewed on an annual basis, and sooner if there are changes in legislation. The review will be undertaken by the Lead nurse at Leighton Road surgery.

Please refer to the Green Book1 and relevant guidelines for more detailed information on vaccine management in the UK.