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| The Lordship lane surgery:Policy for vaccine storage |
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Last review 1 Aug 2019

Next review 1 Aug 2021

***Storage of Vaccine***

Rotate stock so that those with the shortest expiry date are moved to the front

of the refrigerator and used first. Make regular stock-checks to remove

expired vaccines. Keep vaccines in more than one fridge where this is

possible. Keeping one particular type of vaccine in one fridge is risky and

should be spread across more than one fridge if possible.

A stock control book (or database with suitable back-up) should be kept to

help maintain the cold chain, as the information will be available without

having to open the fridge door for long periods to examine the stock. This

record should:

Keep track of orders, expiry dates and running totals of vaccines.

Incorporate the refrigerator temperature monitoring chart so that all the

information is kept in one place.

Be dedicated to one fridge – there should be a book for each fridge.

Vaccines used within general practice should usually be used directly from the

refrigerator.

If a vaccine session is going to be carried out elsewhere, such as in a school,

the vaccine should be transported in an appropriate validated cool box (with

minimum and maximum thermometer). The vaccines should be placed quickly

into the validated cool boxes and opening must be kept to a minimum. If there

are any unused vaccines left over at the end of a vaccination session,

providing there is evidence from the temperature monitoring that the cold

chain has been maintained, the vaccines can be returned to the vaccine

refrigerator. Returned vaccines should be marked so that they can be used at

the earliest opportunity

Vaccines are to be stored in their original packaging at +2oC to +8oC and

protected from light, as exposure to ultraviolet light will cause loss of potency.

The original packaging is printed with the expiry dates and batch numbers. It

protects the vaccine from light, and damage and helps to maintain a

consistent temperature. It also contains a patient information leaflet or a

summary of product characteristics. Some vaccines have fairly short expiry

dates, so do not over-order or stockpile.

All vaccines are sensitive to some extent to heat and cold. Heat speeds up

the decline in potency of most vaccines, thus reducing their shelf life.

Effectiveness cannot be guaranteed for vaccines unless they have been

stored at the correct temperature. Freezing may cause deterioration of the

vaccine and lead to hairline cracks in the ampoule, vial or pre-filled syringe

which could potentially allow the contents to become contaminated. Patients

should not normally be asked to store vaccines, but if they are doing so they

should be given clear instructions on safe storage.

Policy and Procedure for maintaining the vaccine Cold Chain

***Refrigerator***

Temperatures in the fridge are to be monitored and recorded at least once

each working day, preferably twice a day and documented as maximum

reading, minimum reading and actual reading. The maximum and minimum

functions must be reset after each temperature reading. A sample

temperature record chart can be found at Appendix 1.

Thermometers will identify when the temperature may have been outside the

recommended range. Digital thermometers are the most reliable, preferably

those with a probe that goes into the centre of the load. Thermometers,

where used, are to be reset and replaced according the manufacturer’s

guidance in the centre of the fridge. Fridges that have an external electronic

display still need an additional digital thermometer in case of failure of the

built-in thermometer or loss of power to the refrigerator (See appendix 2).

Specialised refrigerators are available for the storage of pharmaceutical

products, and must be used for vaccines and diluents. Ordinary domestic

refrigerators must not be used. Food, drink and clinical specimens must

not be stored in the same refrigerator as vaccines. Opening of the refrigerator

door should be kept to a minimum in order to maintain a constant

temperature.

Refrigerators should not be situated near a radiator or any other heat source

and should be appropriately ventilated. Air should be able to circulate freely

on all sides of the refrigerator. Failure to do this may result in overheating of

the fridge, especially in very hot weather.

All vaccines are Prescription Only Medicines (POMs) and must be stored

under locked conditions. Either the refrigerator is lockable or the room is

locked when not occupied by a member of staff.

Vaccines must never be left unattended once removed from the refrigerator.

Sufficient space is to be provided within the fridge for vaccines to allow for air

to circulate freely. The fridge should be no more than 50% full.

Vaccines should be stored on the shelves but not in the compartments on the

door or on the floor of the main unit.

Accidental interruption of the electricity supply should be prevented by using a

switchless socket or by placing cautionary notices on plugs and sockets.

Ice should not be allowed to build up within the refrigerator, as this reduces

effectiveness. The refrigerator should be defrosted regularly in accordance

with the manufacturer’s guidance.

The refrigerator should be cleaned according to manufacturer’s guidelines.

Records of regular servicing, calibration, defrosting and cleaning should be

Policy and Procedure for maintaining the vaccine Cold Chain

kept. This can be logged on the refrigerator temperature chart (please see

Appendix 1).

It is strongly advised that suitable facilities such as a spare fridge or a cool

box are available in the event of a fridge failure.

***Disruption of Cold Chain***

In the event of cold chain failure the following will apply:

-Check the temperature inside the fridge and try to ascertain how long it

has been without power

- Remove all vaccines to another working refrigerator or storage box until

you can confirm whether or not they can be used. Make sure they are

labelled accordingly.

- Do not use any vaccine that has been out of the cold chain until advice

has been sought from the manufacturer.

- Check the plug. Ensure it hasn’t been disconnected.

- Check whether the failure is due to a short term electricity failure. Do you

have a backup facility such as a generator and is it working?

- Inform the person designated to be in charge of all the refrigerators or a

manager, in their absence, so that a repair engineer can be called.

- Inform your immunisation co-ordinator in the screening and immunisation

team on 0113 824 9515. The vaccine may be usable even when there has

been a cold chain failure. Make a list of all the vaccines affected and gain advice following a cold

chain breach from local:

**Medicines Information Services**:

**NHS Southwark Clinical Commisioning Group**

**1st Floor , Hub 1, PO Box 64529 London SE1P 5LX**

**Base: 160 Tooley ST London SE1 2QH**

**Direct Line: 020 7525 0261**

Complete the stock incident form on vaccine supply section of the

**ImmForm website using your own login and password:**

**https://portal.immform.dh.gov.uk/Logon.aspx?returnurl=%2fVaccineSuppl**

**The vaccine manufacturers**

**- Glaxo Smith Kline on (0808) 100 9997**

**Policy and Procedure for maintaining the vaccine Cold Chain**

**- Sanofi Pasteur on (01628) 587693**

**- Novartis on (08457) 451500**

**- Baxter Healthcare on (01635) 206345**

***The following information should be given:***

The maximum period of cold chain disruption.

The actual, minimum and maximum temperature readings recorded on

the thermometer.

What the vaccines are.

When the next immunisation session is.

Which of the vaccines are required urgently.

Arrange for vaccines to be returned to correct storage conditions immediately

and if it is advised that vaccine may still be used, mark and ensure that these

vaccines are used first. Practice insurance may cover practice-purchased

vaccines but not DH supplied vaccines

Once the vaccine fridge is working again the correct temperature

maintained, replace the vaccines. Any stock destroyed should be

replaced with new stock.

All failures to be recorded and the reasons for the failure to be entered

into the record book. A critical incident report should also be completed.

Follow the guidance on managing cold chain incidents as produced by Public