

Medical student involvement in national vaccination programmes

The Medical Schools Council (MSC) and medical schools across the UK would strongly support any proposal that medical students be involved in the delivery of national vaccination programmes. Giving injections is a core clinical competence and is identified by the General Medical Council as being a practical procedure that medical students should be able to carry out before they graduate. As well as the clinical skills involved in carrying out vaccinations, taking part in any national vaccination programme would give students the opportunity to communicate with a large number of patients and experience of working as part of a multidisciplinary team – all of which would be valuable to their learning.

However, it must be emphasised that their learning and participation in their medical course must come first. Medical students lost valuable learning opportunities during the national lockdowns and they must now focus on achieving the learning outcomes that will allow them to graduate on time. Therefore, any student involvement in vaccination programmes must complement their formal curriculum and not interfere with scheduled teaching.

MSC believes that student involvement in any vaccination programme should be optional on the part of individual students. Students taking part in any national or local vaccination programme must be:

- Appropriately trained to carry out vaccination
- Supervised
- Provided with adequate PPE
- Indemnified