Minister Donnelly announces update to Ireland’s Vaccination Prioritisation List

From [Department of Health](#)

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Today, Tuesday 30 March, the government has approved an update to the [COVID-19 Vaccination Allocation Strategy](#). This strategy sets out the groups to be prioritised for vaccination to best achieve the vaccination programme’s objectives of preventing serious illness, hospitalisation and death. It is based on clinical, scientific and ethical frameworks produced by the National Immunisation Advisory Committee and the Department of Health.

Ireland’s COVID-19 Vaccination Programme has been underway since late last year. In that time, nearly 800,000 doses of COVID-19 vaccines have been administered.

Minister for Health, Stephen Donnelly TD said:

"The vast majority of those who have received vaccines are our most at risk loved ones who have suffered the highest burden of serious illness and death, as well as the social isolation the necessary public health measures have created.

"We have seen nursing home residents and staff, frontline healthcare workers and those aged over 80 receive their COVID-19 vaccines and infection rates in these groups has fallen dramatically, and as a result, we have seen clear evidence of vaccination bonus in this cohort, and recently saw visits to nursing homes restart."

In April, May and June, it is expected that Ireland will administer three million vaccine doses, with four in five adults having received at least one dose of vaccine by the end of June. Vaccination of those aged over 70 continues, with all aged over 70, almost half a million people, to have received their first dose by mid-April.

Vaccination of those aged 16-69 at very high risk from COVID-19 due to specific medical conditions is underway.

The age-based approach will make the roll-out more efficient at higher volumes of vaccinations, and better meets the objective of protecting those at highest risk first.

Minister Donnelly said:

"The move to an allocation strategy focused largely on clinical risk – that is age and medical conditions - makes Ireland’s vaccination programme more efficient, more transparent and fairer."
"We have the benefit of learning from our own experience over the past three months, and what has been shown to be most effective internationally. It means for the first time that we can give better information to the very reasonable question ‘when will I be vaccinated?’.

The move to an age-based model better supports the programme objectives by:

- protecting those at highest risk of severe disease first, which benefits everyone most
- facilitating planning and execution of the programme across the entire country
- improving transparency and fairness

The government has authorised the purchase of over 18m vaccines, subject to regulatory approvals.

Notes

Read NIAC’s updated recommendations on priority groups for COVID-19 vaccination.

Revised Vaccine Allocation Strategy

1. People aged 65 years and older who are residents of long-term care facilities (likely to include all staff and residents on site)

2. Frontline healthcare workers

3. People aged 70 and older

4. People aged 16-69 with a medical condition that puts them at very high risk of severe disease and death

5. People aged 65-69 whose underlying condition puts them at a high risk of severe disease and death

6. Other people aged 65-69, Key workers essential to the vaccine programme

7. People aged 16-64 who have an underlying condition that puts them at high risk of severe disease and death

8. Residents of long-term care facilities aged 16-64

9. People aged 64 years and younger in the following order:

   - 64-55 years
   - 54-45 years
   - 44-35 years
   - 34-25 years
   - 24-16 years

People aged 16-64 living or working in crowded settings*
*TBC – these cohorts will be vaccinated in parallel