Statement from the National Public Health Emergency Team - Friday 14 May

From Department of Health

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Today's cases

The Health Protection Surveillance Centre has today been notified of 4 additional deaths related to COVID-19.

Of the deaths notified today:

- 2 occurred in May
- 1 occurred in February
- 1 occurred in January

There has been a total of 4,941 COVID-19 related deaths in Ireland.

As of midnight Thursday 13 May, the HPSC has been notified of 425 confirmed cases of COVID-19. There has now been a total of 254,870* confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Ireland.

(*Validation of data at the HPSC has resulted in the denotification of 5 confirmed cases. The figure of 254,870 confirmed cases reflects this.)

Of the cases notified today:

- 202 are men and 223 are women
- 78% are under 45 years of age
- 4% are over 65 years of age
- the median age is 29 years old

Latest update on vaccines

As of last Tuesday (11 May) there have been 1,922,913 doses of COVID-19 vaccine administered in Ireland:

- 1,408,105 people have received their first dose
- 514,808 people have received their second dose

Dr Tony Holohan, Chief Medical Officer at the Department of Health said:
"Many of us have fond memories of our time in school, particularly the traditional celebrations that mark the formal end of in-school learning like graduation ceremonies for sixth-year students. I am aware that this is an important time in the lives of young adults as they take a break from studying for an evening to celebrate with friends.

"Unfortunately, this year, it is not possible for events of this nature to take place. It is very important that all students preparing to sit state exams in June take the necessary precautions now to ensure you do not contract COVID-19, particularly in the last remaining days before the commencement of the Leaving Cert. Do not attend graduation ceremonies or events. Take this time to restrict your social contacts and continue to follow the public health advice."

Dr Abigail Collins, Consultant in Public Health Medicine, HSE:

"Schools have been advised that they should not have end of year graduation ceremonies for sixth year students in whole year groups or facilitate the attendance of parents or other family members either on the school premises or in any other locations.

"It is very important not to carry out any activities that may put sixth year students at risk of exposure to COVID-19. Schools are also asked to strongly encourage students to act responsibly and not to attend any social events or gatherings which greatly increase the risk of spreading COVID-19."

Professor Philip Nolan, Chair of the NPHET Irish Epidemiological Modelling Advisory Group:

"The profile of COVID-19 in Ireland is generally stable with grounds for optimism. Disease incidence is stable and we are seeing improvements in some indicators. Hospital and ICU admissions are decreasing slowly, the 7 day moving average is reduced, the 5-day moving average is stable, the national positivity rate has reduced to 2.4% and incidence among all age groups is reducing.

"The data also reveals the positive effects of vaccination, not only incidence in the over 65 age groups below the national average and rapidly declining, but we are seeing a very large discrepancy in the probability of being hospitalised or dying. It is clear that vaccination not only decreases infection but also decreases the severity of any disease that breaks through."

Dr Cillian de Gascun, Medical Virologist and Director of the National Virus Reference Laboratory:

"While it’s important to remain vigilant in emerging SARS-CoV-2 variants, current evidence indicates that the vaccines we have are very effective against all currently circulating variants so we would encourage everyone to get vaccinated when offered the opportunity."

The COVID-19 data hub provides up-to-date information on the key indicators of COVID-19 in the community, including daily data on Ireland’s COVID-19 Vaccination Programme.

- The 5-day moving average is 417.