



Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland

# High Level Task Force on COVID-19 Vaccination

## 21st December 2020 Meeting

**Updates, decisions and actions from meeting**

## High Level Task Force on COVID-19 Vaccination

**Monday 21st December 2020 14:00**

Updates, decisions and actions arising from meeting

### 1. Attendees

<b>A. Members in attendance</b>	<b>B. Additional attendees in support</b>
Prof. Brian MacCraith, Task Force Chair	<i>i. Task Force Secretariat</i>
Dr Tony Holohan, Chief Medical Officer, DOH	Kate Waterhouse, Task Force Secretariat
Fergal Goodman, Assistant Secretary, Health Protection Division, DOH	<i>ii. In Attendance</i>
Liz Canavan, Chair, Senior Officials Group on COVID-19	Dr Lorraine Doherty, Clinical Director Health Protection, HSE
Paul Reid, Chief Executive Officer, HSE	Sean Bresnan, National Director of Procurement, HSE
Dr Colm Henry, Chief Clinical Officer, HSE	Gerry O'Brien, Director, Health Protection, DOH
Paul Quinn, Government CPO and CEO, OGP	Deirdre Watters, Head of Communications, DOH
Barry Lowry, Chief Information Officer, OGCIO	Lucy Jessop, SRO Director, National Immunisation Office, HSE
Dermot Mulligan, Assistant Secretary, Innovation and Investment Division, DETE	David Walsh, SRO WS4 - Vaccine Process & Workforce
Derek McCormack, Expert on Cold Chain Logistics	John Cuddihy, SRO WS5 - Surveillance, Monitoring and Reporting
Dalton Philips, Chief Executive Officer, DAA	Fran Thompson, SRO WS6 - Enabling Technology & Information
Lorraine Nolan, Chief Executive, Health Products Regulatory Authority (HPRA)	Michael Lohan, IDA
Rachel Kenna, Chief Nursing Officer, DOH	<i>iii. Programme support</i>
Prof Karina Butler, Chair, National Immunisation Advisory Committee (NIAC)	Michael McDaid (PWC), Programme Office
Derek Tierney, Programme Director	Yvonne Mowlds (PWC), Programme Office

## 2. Updates, decisions and approvals by Task Force

At the meeting, the Task Force:

- Welcomed new member, Professor Karina Butler, Chair of the National Immunisation Advisory Committee.
- Reviewed an update on actions, noting two further actions were completed (providing copies of the Strategy and Implementation Plan to HLTF members, and seeking additional guidance from NIAC on sub-prioritisation within Group 1), and two actions remained in progress:
  - Conclusion of a legal and clinical review of consent form(s): DOH will conclude its review of AG advice and provide it to WS7 later this afternoon;
  - An update was given on labelling and splitting packs, with some further details to be confirmed.
- Noted that EMA conditional approval was given for the Pfizer vaccine, that formal EU approval is expected by 22nd December and that all relevant materials for training, education, comms, leaflets etc. will then be completed and finalised by NIAC/NIO/ONMSD.
- Noted that expected delivery dates and finalised figures on the numbers of doses to be received are anticipated tonight, and agreed that Sean Bresnan will share finalised information once confirmed, with the provisional expectation that the first limited Pfizer shipments will arrive on 26 December (2 shippers), with doses to increase to 42 trays per week, and the first large shipment expected w/c 4 January.
- Noted the initial plan to hold back 50% of delivery for second dose, and the intention to keep this under review.
- Discussed the letter from NIAC of 17 December on sub-prioritisation within Group 1, and noted that NIAC expect to issue a final letter to DOH on this today. The need was also noted for the finalised guidance of NIAC before plans for an initial rollout can be finalised, including IT, distribution, workforce and communications.
- Re-affirmed the importance of agility of the Implementation Plan, the very tight timeline and the complexity of the logistics involved in the vaccination programme, and the role of the HLTF, not as changing or replacing existing roles across the system, but as bringing key stakeholders together to ensure close coordination of work across all relevant bodies so any issues can be quickly identified, and pragmatic, creative solutions found. Agreed that all decision-making must involve consideration of the implications for each workstream, and that all decisions need to be shared as soon as possible.
- Re-affirmed the importance of safety, of clinical advice and of ensuring public confidence in the vaccine.
- Agreed that everything possible would be done to commence vaccinations on 30/31 December and discussed contingency plans for this, including possible small roll-out on 30/31 December in four hospitals in Dublin, Galway and Cork; noted that meetings on this are ongoing today, including in relation to IT, workforce and training, which is planned for 29 December; and noted the impact of the new plans on minimum IT requirements as well as IT contingency plans, including the use of Swiftqueue.
- Re-affirmed the importance of informed consent, including in finalising roll-out plans.

- Agreed the need to prepare for scaling-up of the vaccination programme, discussed a dynamic supply and demand capability modelling under WS1, and considered two scenarios based on a number of assumptions, indicative figures from other vaccine programmes and emerging evidence from the vaccines in the US; it was noted that this modelling can be used to Inform the roll-out of the programme, including workforce planning, and it was agreed that in any scenario a large workforce will be required.
- Noted good progress across the programme of work.
- Agreed a provisional date for the next meeting of Monday 28 December at 2pm.
- Agreed that a summary update on the Implementation Plan will form the basis of an update to Government on 29 December.

**New actions agreed by Task Force – 21st December**

#	Action	Owner
1	NIAC will issue a final letter to DOH today with recommendations on sub-prioritisation within Group 1.	NIAC/Prof Karina Butler
2	An update of the Implementation Plan will be prepared and will form the basis of an update to Government on 29 December.	Prof Brian MacCraith, Derek Tierney, Fergal Goodman