



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

High Level Task Force on COVID-19 Vaccination

28th December 2020 Meeting

Updates, decisions and actions from meeting

High Level Task Force on COVID-19 Vaccination

Monday 28th December 2020 14:00

Updates, decisions and actions arising from meeting

1. Attendees

A. Members in attendance	B. Additional attendees in support
Prof Brian MacCraith, Task Force Chair	<i>i. Task Force Secretariat</i>
Prof Karina Butler, Chair, NIAC	Kate Waterhouse, Task Force Secretariat
Liz Canavan, Chair, Senior Officials Group on COVID-19	<i>ii. In Attendance</i>
Fergal Goodman, Assistant Secretary, Health Protection Division, DOH	Sean Bresnan, National Director of Procurement, HSE
Dr Colm Henry, Chief Clinical Officer, HSE	Gerry O'Brien, Director, Health Protection, DOH
Dr Tony Holohan, Chief Medical Officer, DOH	Deirdre Watters, Head of Communications, DOH
Rachel Kenna, Chief Nursing Officer, DOH	Lucy Jessop, SRO WS2, Director, NIO, HSE
Barry Lowry, Chief Information Officer, OGCIO	David Walsh, SRO WS4
Derek McCormack, Expert on Cold Chain Logistics	John Cuddihy, SRO WS5
Dermot Mulligan, Assistant Secretary, Innovation and Investment Division, DETE	Fran Thompson, SRO WS6
Lorraine Nolan, Chief Executive, HPRA	Dr Ronan Glynn, Deputy CMO, DOH
Dalton Philips, Chief Executive Officer, DAA	<i>iii. Programme support</i>
Paul Quinn, Government CPO and CEO, OGP	Keiran Barbalich (PWC), Programme Office
Paul Reid, Chief Executive Officer, HSE	Michael McDaid (PWC), Programme Office
Martin Shanahan, Chief Executive Officer, IDA	Yvonne Mowlds (PWC), Programme Office
Derek Tierney, Programme Director	<i>iv. In partial attendance</i>
	Minister Stephen Donnelly, Minister for Health

2. Apologies

Dr. Lorraine Doherty, Clinical Director Health Protection, HSE

3. Updates, decisions and approvals by Task Force

At the meeting, the Task Force:

- Was addressed by Minister Stephen Donnelly, who acknowledged the work of the TF, thanked all for the work done to date and underlined the importance of:
 - being able to scale up operations quickly for a number of reasons including the possible early approval of Moderna and Astra-Zeneca vaccines;
 - commencing vaccinations in nursing homes as quickly as possible;
 - ensuring a strong communications programme.

- Reviewed an update on actions, noting completion of all open actions, in particular:
 - Conclusion by NIO/DOH of legal and clinical review of consent form(s);
 - Confirmation of approach to distribution model and labelling for Day 1;
 - Final letter issued by NIAC to DOH with recommendations on roll-out over the Initial days of the vaccination programme;
 - An update of the Implementation Plan that will form the basis of an update to Government on 28 December.

- Reviewed the main points of the updated Implementation Plan, and agreed that it should proceed for Cabinet review this afternoon in advance of the vaccine roll-out commencing tomorrow, 29 December. Main points noted:
 - Significant progress on the IT system, including development of a minimal viable product (MVP), which will be ready for 30 December;
 - Augmentation of the communications strand, with an external resource to support the programme, key communications milestones, the positive impact of the focus to date on building public confidence in vaccine safety (separately, the need to increase social media capability and to counter misinformation was discussed);
 - Mobilisation of the integrated forecasting function across the programme;
 - Arrival of first doses of Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine on 26 December, an indicative delivery schedule for the remaining Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine doses; and a potential date of 6 January for EMA approval of the Moderna vaccine;
 - The initial contingency plan to hold back sufficient stock for second doses and intention to commence administration of second doses on Day 22, which will require a significant workforce increase;
 - Definition and size of first two cohorts for vaccine based on CSO data, and that work is ongoing in the HSE on sub-cohorts of Cohort 2;
 - Following NIAC's guidance letter, details are being finalised for initial roll-out tomorrow in 4 acute hospitals in Dublin, Cork and Galway using peer vaccination workforce; over the first 5 weeks of the programme, vaccination will be rolled out across over ~600 LTCF sites using community vaccination teams;
 - Virtual training will commence tomorrow, 29 December, for Day 1, and planning for other VALs will continue throughout January;
 - Delivery models for distribution of the vaccine; system to track and trace distribution, and coordination across workstreams to maximise and monitor impact, distribution and uptake of vaccines.

- Agreed the importance of a continued focus on scaling up the vaccination programme going forward, noting the fluidity of the situation as well as the data that will be available from SAP software (track and trace) and the new IT system, as well as the development of a model for supply and demand analysis.
- Noted that comprehensive briefing questions are being prepared under the communications workstream, that the HSE will produce a FAQ leaflet in conjunction with the NIO, which will be reviewed on an ongoing basis, and agreed to consider the need for further supporting information (in addition to general public information sheet already available and the NIAC Chapter produced for clinicians).
- Discussed the important role of GPs and pharmacists in delivery of vaccinations, noted that the HSE and DOH are working on advancing the process on this, after which they will engage with the representative bodies in accordance with the statutory governance structures in place.
- Reaffirmed the importance of agility of the vaccination programme, and noted that there would be clarity on certain matters over time, including assurance on delivery of vaccines, potential formal approval (EMA) of the use of 6th dose in a vaccine vial, and guidance regarding the administering of 2 doses.
- Noted that an end-to-end workshop took place earlier today with all SROs and their teams, which provided reassurance about readiness for the next number of days this week, and involved discussions of contingency plans, including for IT. The importance of integration across workstreams was again highlighted.
- Noted 'green' status on programme of work as it relates to delivery on 29/30/31 December.
- Agreed that the next meeting of the HLTF will take place on Monday 4 January at 2pm.

New actions agreed by Task Force – 21st December

#	Action	Owner
1	Updated Implementation Plan to be submitted to Government on 28 December	Prof Brian MacCraith, Fergal Goodman
2	HSE will produce a FAQ booklet in conjunction with NIO	Lucy Jessop, Deirdre Watters
3	HSE/DOH to advance process on role of GPs/pharmacists in vaccination programme	Fergal Goodman, Paul Reid (Pat Healy)