



Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland

# High Level Task Force on COVID-19 Vaccination

## 25th January 2021 Meeting

**Updates, decisions and actions from meeting**

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Monday 25th January 2021 14:00

Updates, decisions and actions arising from meeting

### 1. Attendees

| <b>A. Members in attendance</b>  | <b>B. Additional attendees in support</b>  |
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| 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, SOG 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                                     | Dr Lorraine Doherty, Clinical Director Health Protection, HSE                              |
| Dr Tony Holohan, Chief Medical Officer, DOH                                    | Dr Ronan Glynn, Deputy CMO, DOH  |
| Rachel Kenna, Chief Nursing Officer, DOH                                       | Gerry O'Brien, Director, Health Protection, DOH  |
| Barry Lowry, Chief Information Officer, OGCI                                   | Deirdre Watters, Head of Communications, DOH   |
| Derek McCormack, Expert on Cold Chain Logistics                                | Elizabeth Headon, Programme Communications   |
| Dermot Mulligan, Assistant Secretary, Innovation and Investment Division, DETE | Dr Lucy Jessop, SRO WS2, Director, NIO, HSE  |
| Lorraine Nolan, Chief Executive, HPRA  | David Walsh, SRO WS4   |
| Dr Nuala O'Connor, ICGP  | Dr John Cuddihy, SRO WS5   |
| Dalton Philips, Chief Executive Officer, DAA                                   | Fran Thompson, SRO WS6   |
| Paul Quinn, Government CPO and CEO, OGP  | David Leach, SRO WS7   |
| Paul Reid, Chief Executive Officer, HSE  | Andrew Byrne, Immunisation and Infectious Diseases Policy, DOH                             |
| Martin Shanahan, Chief Executive Officer, IDA                                  | Damien McCallion, National Director, HSE   |
| Derek Tierney, Programme Director  | Deirdre McNamara, General Manager, Quality & Patient Safety, Acute Hospitals Division, HSE |
|  | Minister Stephen Donnelly, Minister for Health   |
|  | <i>iii. Programme support</i>  |
|  | Yvonne Mowlds (PWC), Programme Office  |

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

At the meeting, the Task Force:

- Reviewed an update on actions, with good progress noted on possible additional inputs to data reporting, and completion of three further actions: finalisation of arrangements in relation to GPs/pharmacists in the vaccination programme; engagement with state agencies and the Public Appointment Service to seek support in relation to the HSE building out its broader vaccination workforce; and circulation of the indicative operational scorecard to the TF.
- Heard a communications update, including research showing high demand for detailed information; ongoing and planned campaigns as well as ongoing political briefing; and key news events, including commencement of second doses; completed vaccination of nursing home residents and staff; vaccination of GPs; prioritisation and sequencing; and supply disruptions and delivery. The TF also considered a detailed overview of Phase 2 of the COVID-19 vaccination advertising programme.
- Considered an update on the vaccination programme, noting that 143,000 doses were administered to 24th January; ca. 4,800 vaccinators have completed training; the HPRA has published its first safety update, with nothing concerning to report; the delivery schedule for Astra-Zeneca (AZ) remains uncertain and there is clarity on Pfizer BioNTech supply only until end March. The TF also discussed the impact of outbreaks on the vaccine rollout, and ongoing engagement in relation to additional workforce and Vaccination Administration Locations (VALs).
- Discussed upcoming planned activity: completion of rollout to over 65s and staff in LTCFs (6,551 planned across 78 LTCFs); continuation of Dose 2 administration (ca. 47,000 planned); ongoing work on data backlog and IT readiness for GP rollout; and continued engagement and work on scaling up workforce and VALs as required.
- Discussed plans for Mass Vaccination Centres (MVCs) as part of scaling-up strategy, including governance; location options and activity projections; site details; workforce requirements, including clinical; operational models and requirements; ICT infrastructure and connectivity; planning and analysis of proposals, including insights from experience to date, accessing expertise, procurement, local engagement; contingency planning and communications. It was noted that work would continue on finalising details, and it was agreed that VALs and workforce will now be a standing agenda item.
- Noted good progress on the programme overall, with green RAG status for the initial rollout phase, notwithstanding ongoing challenges and risks, including: supply chain resilience; scale-up of workforce and VALs; IT readiness and adoption; data vulnerability; and the impact of the third wave. Reviewed status updates on all workstreams.
- Held a discussion on scenario planning, which included a review of AZ vaccine features, delivery schedule scenarios, AZ dose interval and the implications for stock

management and rollout; and ongoing EU engagement in relation to supply. The importance of clinical guidance was reaffirmed, and it was noted that further trial data on AZ is expected.

- Heard some comments from Minister Stephen Donnelly on the details of the AZ vaccine and potential go-live dates for rollout of the AZ vaccine and MVCs, as well as the sub-prioritisation of cohorts and measuring the impact of the vaccine.
- Discussed the next phase of the vaccination programme (Feb-Mar), preparations for which are continuing notwithstanding key challenges and risks; key assumptions on vaccine authorisation and supply were outlined as well as key activities projected, noting the anticipated rollout to Cohort 3 and ongoing planning for scaling-up of operations. An overview of key workstream activities forecast was also noted, including in relation to supply chain, consent, workforce, VALs, public communications and engagement, post-surveillance and ICT matters.
- Reviewed the updated indicative operational scorecard and considered the ongoing integration of relevant data.
- Noted, in summary, that the key areas of focus of the TF are currently the IT system; mobilisation of the GP network; VAL roll-out; workforce scaling; and the need for guidance on the distribution models and vaccine products for the next cohorts
- Agreed that the next meeting will take place on Monday, 1 February at 2pm.

**New actions agreed by Task Force – 25 January**

| # | Action  | Owner                      |
|---|---|----------------------------|
| 1 | HSE Comms Public Information Campaign for Cohort 3 to commence in the coming week.  | David Leach                |
| 2 | VAL, Workforce and IT updates to be presented at the 1 Feb HLTF                     | David Walsh, Fran Thompson |
| 3 | Barry Lowry to give a short presentation on vaccine certification at the 1 Feb HLTF | Barry Lowry                |