



Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland

# High Level Task Force on COVID-19 Vaccination

## 9 August 2021 Meeting

**Updates, decisions and actions from meeting**

**High Level Task Force on COVID-19 Vaccination****Monday 9 August 2021 14:00****1. Attendees**

<b>A. Members in attendance</b>	<b>B. Additional attendees in support</b>
Prof Brian MacCraith, Task Force Chair	Kate Waterhouse, Task Force Secretariat
Barry Lowry, Chief Information Officer, OGCI	Dr Ronan Glynn, Deputy CMO, DOH
Derek McCormack, Expert on Cold Chain Logistics	Gerry O'Brien, Health Protection Division, DOH
Dr Nuala O'Connor, ICGP	Roisin Collier, DOH
Dalton Philips, Chief Executive Officer, DAA	Prof Martin Cormican, HSE
Paul Quinn, Government CPO and CEO, OGP	Lyndsey Drea, Head of Comms, DOH
<b>B. Additional attendees in support</b>	Eileen Hearne, Government Information Service
Dr Lucy Jessop, SRO WS2, Director, NIO	Eugene Lennon, DETE
Paul Flanagan, SRO WS3	Damien McCallion, National Director, HSE
David Walsh, SRO WS4	Deirdre McNamara, General Manager, Quality & Patient Safety, Acute Hospitals Division, HSE
Dr John Cuddihy, SRO WS5	Anna Conlon, Special Advisor
David Leach, SRO WS7	Brian Murphy, Special Advisor
	Keiran Barbalich (PWC), Programme Office
	Fiona Smith (PWC), Programme Office

**Apologies:** Liz Canavan, Chair, SOG on COVID-19; Dr Colm Henry, Chief Clinical Officer, HSE; Dr Lorraine Nolan, Chief Executive, HPRA; Paul Reid, Chief Executive Officer, HSE; Martin Shanahan, Chief Executive Officer, IDA; Derek Tierney, Programme Director; Sean Bresnan, National Director of Procurement, HSE; Fran Thompson, SRO WS6; Deirdre Watters, Head of Communications, DOH.

## Updates, decisions and approvals by Task Force

At the meeting, the Task Force:

- Noted that the online portal for those aged 12-15 will open this Thursday and that vaccinations will commence this coming weekend; extremely high uptake across the programme; and the further success of last weekend's walk-in clinics.
- Heard a communications update: public information campaigns are ongoing, including an overarching GIS campaign with high-level messaging across radio and social media; the HSE's extensive social media campaign is ongoing with over 1m followers and a reach of 6-7m people, including a focus on younger social media users across relevant platforms, and high numbers of queries (over 6,800 last week); content continues to be generated by @SciComm\_Collective on vaccine myth-busting and the Delta variant; and the campaign for those aged 12-15 includes radio ads for parents, press ads to open registration and new content on HSE.ie. News coverage last week included walk-in clinics, vaccination for 12-15 year-olds, pregnancy and the vaccine, and the COVID Digital Cert. Research continues to show strong uptake attitudes, borne out in extremely high uptake across the programme.
- Heard a programme update: 6.12m vaccines have now been administered (ca. 88.6% of adults dose 1; ca. 77% fully vaccinated); ca. 226K vaccines were administered last week; planning for vaccination of those aged 12-15 continues, with portal to open Thursday and vaccinations to commence this weekend; further walk-in clinics were held at the weekend; retail pharmacies have moved from Janssen to Pfizer (ca. 350 participating with more to come); planning for booster programme continues; and EU has concluded an advance purchase agreement with Novavax. Plans for w/c 9 August including administration of ca.200K vaccines.
- Reviewed current issues:
  - Flexible access to vaccination – lessons learned from walk-in clinics being updated after second weekend of clinics;
  - HPSC/HSE Comms analysis of uptake figures – ongoing, including county-by-county, socio-economic and workplace analysis, with insights incorporated into communications with success to date: e.g., 80% of those aged 18-29 now registered/vaccinated and participation continues to rise;
  - Completion of current programme – it is expected that this phase will be substantially completed by mid-late September;
- Considered a programme status report, noting that work remains ongoing across all workstreams, including WS3 (details on purchase of additional 700K Pfizer doses); WS4 (vaccinations ongoing across cohorts, including socially vulnerable; 200-300K VC appointments to be offered to cohort 9 this week, including ca.150K Dose 2 appointments); and WS6 (significant work ongoing; Sprint 12\_C Hotfix, supporting vaccination of those aged 12-15; HSE planning considerations for boosters underway and assessment of potential Covax changes now commenced).
- Discussed Integrated Operational Planning, including:

- Vaccination of those aged 12-15, noting that the registration portal will open on Thursday, the communications campaign (online/radio) has commenced, and vaccinations are due to commence this coming weekend;
  - A range of measures to increase uptake in younger cohorts, noting ongoing work with certain employers and with pharmacies in socially vulnerable communities;
  - An overview of the weekend walk-in clinics, attended by ca.8,700 people across a broad spread of ages – ca.6K were not previously registered; also AZ mop-up clinic on Saturday was attended by ca. 500 people – 19% were HCWs.
  - DNA analysis for 26 July–1 August was 9.2% and was 8.1% from 5 July–1 August based on 1.266m appointments.
- Discussed vaccine supply and forecast, noting that two very large Pfizer deliveries (including vaccines procured from Romania) are expected on weeks commencing 16<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> of August; and that two Moderna deliveries were significantly reduced.
  - Noted under medium-term issues that considerations on heterologous use of vaccines are ongoing; and that final advice from NIAC on the booster programme, is awaited.
  - Reviewed operational performance, including the scorecard (significant work done to substantially reduce time between registration and appointment scheduling with tiny numbers now awaiting appointments); rolling 7-day cumulative total (below 250K for first time since early May); % of age groups vaccinated (noting extremely high registration levels, including 65% of those aged 16-17, 80% of those aged 18-29, and over 90% for all age groups above 40); cumulative uptake among adults across the EU/EEA (Ireland ranked 4<sup>th</sup> on 6 August); and a heat map of incidence rates (disease levels remain high, particularly among those aged 19-24).
  - Noted, in summary, commencement of vaccination for those aged 12-15; confirmation of delivery details for the additional Pfizer supply secured from Romania; pivoting of pharmacies from Janssen to Pfizer; and the focus on enhancing uptake in younger cohorts.
  - Agreed that the next meeting will take place on Monday 16 August at 2pm.