



Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland

# High Level Task Force on COVID-19 Vaccination

## 4 February 2021 Meeting

**Updates, decisions and actions from meeting**

## High Level Task Force on COVID-19 Vaccination

Monday 4 February 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>
Prof Brian MacCraith, Task Force Chair	<i>ii. In Attendance</i>
Prof Karina Butler, Chair, NIAC	Sean Bresnan, National Director of Procurement, HSE
Liz Canavan, Chair, SOG on COVID-19	Dr Lorraine Doherty, Clinical Director Health Protection, HSE
Fergal Goodman, Assistant Secretary, Health Protection Division, DOH	Dr Ronan Glynn, Deputy CMO, DOH
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	Elizabeth Headon, Programme Communications
Barry Lowry, Chief Information Officer, OGCIO	Dr Lucy Jessop, SRO WS2, Director, NIO, HSE
Derek McCormack, Expert on Cold Chain Logistics	David Walsh, SRO WS4
Dermot Mulligan, Assistant Secretary, Innovation and Investment Division, DETE	Dr John Cuddihy, SRO WS5
Lorraine Nolan, Chief Executive, HPRA	Fran Thompson, SRO WS6
Dr Nuala O'Connor, ICGP	David Leach, SRO WS7
Dalton Philips, Chief Executive Officer, DAA	Andrew Byrne, Immunisation and Infectious Diseases Policy, DOH
Paul Quinn, Government CPO and CEO, OGP	Deirdre McNamara, General Manager, Quality & Patient Safety, Acute Hospitals Division, HSE
Paul Reid, Chief Executive Officer, HSE	Pat Healy, National Director Social Care, HSE
Derek Tierney, Programme Director	
<b>Additional attendees in support</b>	<i>iii. Programme support</i>
<i>i. Task Force Secretariat</i>	Yvonne Mowlds (PWC), Programme Office
Kate Waterhouse, Task Force Secretariat	Keiran Barbalich (PWC), Programme Office

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

This additional, special meeting of the Task Force was convened in order to discuss the new circumstances of the vaccination programme in light of recommendations on the administration of the Astra Zeneca vaccine, in particular to update the TF on the context, including that arising from policy decisions, to consider the implications of the situation for the vaccination programme and to discuss feedback and questions from those in attendance. At the meeting, the Task Force:

- Heard an update on context related to policy decisions on the AstraZeneca (AZ) vaccine arising from EMA recommendations, and NIAC guidance issued to the Department of Health, on consideration of which the CMO advised the Minister for Health that mRNA vaccines should be administered to those over 70. NIAC also provided recommendations on dose intervals for the AZ vaccine.
- Agreed that the programme would continue on the basis of a supply-driven model without vaccine stockpiling, and discussed the implications for roll-out to cohorts 1-3, including expected delivery schedules and work to be done on IT, training, and consent and information forms. Clinical advice on dose intervals was discussed, and it was noted that this will remain under review as further data becomes available. It was also agreed that future policy considerations beyond cohort 3 would be discussed at a later date following consideration by DOH.
- Discussed the new vaccine roll-out model for cohort 3, including background data on population sub-cohorts, GP practices and coverage, logistical complexities arising for community roll-out due to the characteristics of the mRNA vaccine, including IT challenges, logistics, administration and distribution, requirements for further engagement with the relevant stakeholders, and communication considerations. Noted that roll-out to cohort 3 will commence as planned, despite adjustments.
- Heard a presentation from Pat Healy, National Director Social Care, HSE on plans to vaccinate cohort 3 through the GP operating model, which focussed on the details of workable models for the reconfiguration of the plan arising from the new AZ policy decisions, including the supply and delivery approach and key challenges. It was noted that good engagement was ongoing with the Information and Technology workstream, and it was agreed that work would continue on these models, and that an indicative plan would be available tomorrow with a finalised plan to follow.
- Considered updates on and discussed the changes to and scaling up of logistics/distribution and IT, including under the new plans.
- Reaffirmed the focus on safe, efficient and effective delivery of the roll-out, including ensuring that plans remained focussed on protecting the most vulnerable, on minimising waste, and on ensuring practical solutions and advice, including at a local level.
- Reaffirmed the ongoing need for agility and adaptability due to the ongoing unpredictability and uncertainty inherent in vaccine production and distribution to

date, and the need to adjust plans on an ongoing basis as new vaccines are approved and new vaccine details emerge.

- Agreed the importance of clearly communicating decisions and plans, in particular outlining and explaining plans and schedules for roll-out to different cohorts; communicating clinical reasoning for changes; providing updates on vaccines in train; and providing updated vaccination figures on a regular basis - the HSE will report figures daily from next Monday with a 48-hr time lag.
- It was noted that an update will be provided to the Taoiseach and Minister for Health following this meeting.
- Agreed that the next meeting will take place as planned on Monday, 8 February at 2pm, and that this will include a further update on plans.

#### **New actions agreed by Task Force – 4 February**

<b>#</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>
<b>1</b>	Provide post-meeting update on vaccination programme plans to Taoiseach and Minister for Health.	Prof Brian MacCraith, Derek Tierney
<b>2</b>	Finalise work on operating models for revised plans to vaccinate cohort 3.	Pat Healy
<b>3</b>	Circulate slides with updated vaccination figures.	Paul Reid