Title: Agenda Item 6 - Communications Update

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Action required:
☐ For noting
☐ For discussion
☐ For decision

Approved for future publication: YES
NPHET – Communications Update
18 Feb 2021

Quantitative Tracker
The nationally representative sample of 2,200 people conducted on behalf of the Department of Health on 15 Feb, available here reveals

- The level of worry at 6.4/10, has fallen back to October levels, as public concern about health system overload falls back. However, worry over the health of family and friends and the economy remain high.
- There are high levels of reported compliance to the public health advice with 86% of the population saying they are remaining at home rather than going out.
- 49% of people believe the worst of the pandemic is happening now, 9% believe that it is ahead of us, with 28% believing the worst of the pandemic is behind us.

Quantitative Tracker – vaccine module
- 54% of the population know someone in their immediate social circle who has had COVID-19
- 86% (69% definite, 17% probable) say they will get the COVID vaccine when it is offered to them
- 37% say they have concerns around the vaccine – 27% are worried about side effects of the vaccine, 23% worried about the long term effects on health.
- GPs are the most trusted source of information on the vaccine for 76% of the population, followed by the HSE (56%)

HSE Vaccine Research - Rollout Priorities
- 53% Fairness
- 27% safety
- 10% information
- 10% speed

Qualitative Tracker
Feedback from the qualitative tracker, for the week commencing 8 Feb, focus groups among young adults reveals:

- For Young Adults, there is a dawning realisation that Covid is here to stay. This requires a reframing – a new way of thinking about Covid which includes acceptance and hope: we’re in it and we’ll come out of it
- Young Adults are outside of the regular Covid discourse. Although they respect news sources such as RTE and HSE, they rarely if ever visit them. Their channels are often mediated emotionally: social media or whatever the people they know think. The result is a set of opinions which are unknowingly ill-informed
- Young Adults have largely been ignored in the public discourse around vaccines and vaccinations, the framing of which has been about saving lives of the elderly. A reframe is required, where Young Adults can see the relevance of the vaccine to their lives: i.e.
vaccinations bring the virus under control, which allows Ireland to get back on its feet, which enables all of us (including Young Adults) to resume normal lives

- There are specific and reasonable concerns regarding the vaccines’ long-term effects for a Young Adults cohort (notably in fertility). These need to be addressed directly and actively

**Campaigns underway**

- Living with COVID - protective actions.
- COVID-19 Vaccines
- Young Adults campaign – Act like you’ve got it

**Campaigns in Development**

- Updating protective behaviours
- Campaign featuring real case studies
- Young Adult Science Communicators