



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

High Level Task Force on COVID-19 Vaccination

10 May 2021 Meeting

Updates, decisions and actions from meeting

High Level Task Force on COVID-19 Vaccination

Monday 10 May 2021 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	Kate Waterhouse, Task Force Secretariat
Liz Canavan, Chair, SOG on COVID-19	Sean Bresnan, National Director of Procurement, HSE
Fergal Goodman, Assistant Secretary, Health Protection Division, DOH	Dr Ronan Glynn, Deputy CMO, DOH
Dr Colm Henry, Chief Clinical Officer, HSE	Dr Lorraine Doherty, Clinical Director Health Protection, HSE
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	Eileen Hearne, Government Information Service
Dermot Mulligan, Assistant Secretary, Innovation and Investment Division, DETE	Damien McCallion, National Director, HSE
Dr Nuala O'Connor, ICGP	Deirdre McNamara, General Manager, Quality & Patient Safety, Acute Hospitals Division, HSE
Dalton Philips, Chief Executive Officer, DAA	Stephen Donnelly TD, Minister for Health
Paul Quinn, Government CPO and CEO, OGP	Anna Conlon, Special Advisor
Paul Reid, Chief Executive Officer, HSE	Deirdre Gillane, Special Advisor
Martin Shanahan, Chief Executive Officer, IDA	Brian Murphy, Special Advisor
Derek Tierney, Programme Director	Keiran Barbalich (PWC), Programme Office
B. Additional attendees in support	Michael McDaid (PWC), Programme Office
Dr Lucy Jessop, SRO WS2, Director, NIO	Yvonne Mowlds (PWC), Programme Office
Dr John Cuddihy, SRO WS5	
Fran Thompson, SRO WS6	
David Leach, SRO WS7	

Apologies: Prof Karina Butler, Chair, NIAC; Lorraine Nolan, Chief Executive, HPRA; Paul Flanagan, SRO WS3

2. Updates, decisions and approvals by Task Force

At the meeting, the Task Force:

- Noted another significant week and important milestones reached, with over 1.8m doses administered to date, 0.5m people fully vaccinated and another daily record of almost 50,000 in a single day, registrations of those aged 50-59 continuing, and the outcome of further NIAC deliberations expected.
- Reviewed open actions, noting ongoing progress on providing VC feedback on length of time taken per vaccination and implication for throughput, and on capturing registration, uptake and DNA data as part of the operational reporting model; and near-term issues, including ongoing progress in relation to the role of pharmacists, linked with expected NIAC guidance and adjustments to the operational model.
- Heard a communications update: Public Information Campaigns include the ongoing national and local radio and digital campaign following Government's announcement on 29 April and a new HSE campaign #ForUsAll and TV campaign; promotion of self-registration continues for those aged 50-69 (over 500K registered). Other highlights include ongoing daily publication of vaccine stats and high traffic to official vaccine-related content; daily political updates and post-Cabinet statements are continuing; news coverage includes the successful registration rollout, the latest NIAC recommendations, vaccine delivery schedules, vaccine dividend, and the easing of restrictions, while research continues to show positive vaccine uptake attitudes. There were 18,600 calls to HSE Live last week – the highest volume to date. Further data on vaccine uptake will be available from the ESRI and the HSE shortly.
- Reviewed a programme update: 1,845,651 vaccines were administered to 9 May, with almost 35% having received Dose 1 and ca. 12.8% of adults fully vaccinated; reflecting the increasing momentum of the programme, noted it was the biggest week for the vaccination programme to date, with over 230K vaccinations administered and over 50K on a single day; 35 VCs are now operational; dose 1 for those aged 65-69 is expected to be substantially completed this week, while registration for those aged 50-59 is ongoing; an update on the vaccination programme update was presented to IMF Article IV review team last week; and the awaited outcome of further NIAC considerations is the main current issue, with implications to be worked into the programme. Also reviewed planned activity for w/c 10 May, including administration of 250-270K vaccines across four main groups: over-70s, high/very high risk, those aged 50-69, and socially vulnerable groups.
- Reviewed a programme status report, noting that supply chain resilience and supply certainty remain key challenges, and that work remains ongoing across all workstreams: some increased supply certainty over next 1-2 weeks (WS2); European Commission statements on vaccine procurement 2022/2023, vaccinations for younger people, variants of concern, and work on broadening list of legal vaccinators via SI (WS3); ongoing vaccinations for cohorts 1 (finalising), 2 (dose 2 for fHCWs and new HCWs), 3 (including house- and hospital-bound patients) and 5 (in VCs), as well as the development of a pathway for vaccinating pregnant women, and vaccination

of socially vulnerable groups that has commenced with homeless people (WS4); and successful deployment of Sprint 8, with Sprint 9 due and 10 in development, as well as planned testing of Optaplanner for scheduling (WS6).

- Heard an update on Integrated Operational Planning, including an overview of VCs (35 VCs operational on 6 May with another due to open on 10 May; good feedback on operations to date) and a workforce readiness update (ongoing development of vaccinator workforce via four main channels; work ongoing to broaden list of legal vaccinators via SI; confirmation of sufficient capacity for non-vaccinator roles).
- Discussed vaccine supply and forecast, noting delivery of 906,980 vaccines in April with significant increases expected through June; Janssen delivery schedules from mid-May and all vaccine delivery schedules from end-May remain unconfirmed, with significant weekly variability expected. Noted that four vaccines are under rolling review by the EMA (Sinovac, Novavax, CureVac and Sputnik V).
- Noted inclusion of a new medium-term issue on future considerations, which includes matters under consideration at EU level (vaccine contracts 2022/2023, vaccination of younger people and escape variants/variants of concern).
- Reviewed operational performance, including the scorecard, ECDC data on uptake across the EU, vaccine administration efficiency (90-100% on a seven-day basis with efficiency measures under ongoing review), and a summary of the vaccine effect to date, which demonstrates a significant impact in vaccinated cohorts (decrease in serious illness, hospitalisation and death; reduced outbreaks in LTCFs and healthcare settings; decrease in HCW cases; significant protection of older and vulnerable groups; and emerging evidence of reducing transmission). Waste minimisation in VCs is being monitored and results will be presented shortly.
- Heard comments from the Minister for Health, Stephen Donnelly, who acknowledged the significant work done in the vaccination programme to date, including in terms of efficiency, and noted the momentum and continued ramp-up of the programme.
- Noted, in summary, significant milestones achieved in recent weeks and in the programme to date, the success of the registration portal, updated NIAC guidance on Janssen, AZ and Pfizer, operational implications of the guidance and plan adjustments, and the supply forecast for Q2.
- Agreed that the next meeting of the HLTF will take place on 17 May.

New actions agreed by Task Force – 10 May

#	Action	Owner
1	Data on VC vaccine waste minimisation to be presented to HLTF	Dr Lucy Jessop

