Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

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BY EMAIL ONLY

Deputy Róisín Shortall
Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2
Email:

27/04/2021

PQ 20160/21 To ask the Minister for Health if a vaccine (details supplied) is being administered to cohort 3 given the revised policy that it is safe and effective for those over 70 years of age; and if he will make a statement on the matter. - AstraZeneca vaccine

Dear Deputy Shortall

Thank you for your representation with regard to your constituent's concerns on receiving the 2nd dose of the AstraZeneca vaccine.

On the 12th April the National Immunisation Advisory Committee (NIAC) issued revised advice to the Department of Health on the use of the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine in light of the outcome of the recent investigation by the European Medicines Agency. The EMA has added unusual clotting events with low platelet counts as very rare side effects to the vaccine product information. These rare events are estimated to occur between 4 and 10 in every 1 million people, one of whom may die.

The benefits versus the risks of this vaccine may vary by age and as alternative COVID-19 vaccines are available in Ireland, NIAC has revised the following recommendations for the use of the AstraZeneca vaccine.

Recommendations

AstraZeneca, is recommended for those aged 60 years and older including those with medical conditions with very high or high risk of severe COVID-19 disease.

AstraZeneca is not recommended for those aged under 60 years including those with medical conditions with very high or high risk of severe COVID-19 disease.

A second dose the vaccine AstraZeneca should not be given to anyone who developed unusual blood clots with low platelets after the first dose.

Advice for those who have received a first dose of Vaxzevria COVID-19 vaccine AstraZeneca is:

- Those aged 60 and older should receive their second dose 12 weeks later as scheduled.
- Those aged under 60 years with a very high risk or high-risk medical condition should receive their second dose 12 weeks later as scheduled.

- Those aged under 60 years without a very high risk or high-risk medical condition should have the scheduled interval between doses extended to 16 weeks to allow further assessment of the benefits and risks as more evidence becomes available.

I hope this provides you with assistance,

Yours faithfully

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Sharon Hayden
General Manager
Office of the CCO