



Oifig Cheannasaí an tSruitha Oibre, Próiseas
Vacsaínithe & Lucht Saothair

Teil: (045) 988 363

Teach Darach, Páirc na Mílaoise, Nás, Cill Dara,
W91KDC2

Office of the Workstream Lead, Vaccination Process &
Workforce

Tel: (045) 988 363

Address: Oak House, Millennium Park, Naas, Kildare,
W91KDC2

17th December, 2021

Deputy O'Callaghan,
Kildare Street,
Dáil Eireann,
Dublin 2

Re: PQ 60659/21

– “To ask the Minister for Health if his attention has been drawn to the fact that persons with underlying health conditions had to wait for five hours outdoors in the cold weather with no toilet facilities to get their Covid-19 booster vaccine in the Citywest vaccination centre; the steps he is taking to ensure that each vaccination centre is equipped with bathroom facilities and has the capacity to ensure persons with underlying conditions and other vulnerabilities are not left waiting for several hours outdoors during the winter months; and if he will make a statement on the matter?”

Dear Deputy O'Callaghan,

The Health Service Executive (HSE) has been requested to reply directly to your above Parliamentary Questions which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position

The booster campaign is supported by a number of different channels (including central vaccination clinics, pharmacies, GPs, etc), which offer both appointment based and walk-in services. Recent experience shows appointment-based clinics are not as popular with people seeking booster vaccinations as they were with the primary dose vaccines. This has resulted in large numbers of people not attending their Vaccination Appointment. Non-attended appointments are uneconomical and inefficient for the vaccination programme and our plan to vaccinate the eligible population.

This has led us to increase the number of walk-in clinics available at central vaccination centres. This allows people to come at a time that suits them and at their convenience. As a consequence of this convenience, there is a certain amount of volatility which can cause a build-up of queues at clinics. This was the case at the Citywest Vaccination Centre on the 27th November, where patients were waiting for several hours to receive their vaccination, an unintended consequence for which we are sorry and have introduced additional actions to prevent a recurrence.

Our response is to organise our clinics with separate queues for those attending walk-in clinics and those with appointments. Clinics have adjusted their opening times and hours to where the peaks are believed to be. In addition, where appropriate, we share live updates of queueing lengths at individual clinics through the HSE's social media channels at least



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twice a day. With this information, members of the public can make an informed decision when to attend a walk in clinic.

In addition, every vaccination centre has bathroom facilities that the public can access. Staff at vaccination centres are on hand to support persons with difficulties, such as underlying conditions. There are also wheelchairs available at every site for persons with limited mobility.

I trust this is of assistance.

Yours sincerely,


p.p

David Walsh
Workstream Lead Vaccination Process and Workforce