



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

Office of the Chief Clinical Officer  
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Oifig an Phríomhoifigigh Clínicíúil  
Ospidéal Dr Steevens|Lána Steevens|Baile Átha Cliath 8|D08 W2A8

**BY EMAIL ONLY**

**Deputy Éamon Ó Cuív**

Dáil Éireann  
Leinster House  
Kildare Street  
Dublin 2  
Email:

Date: 23/02/2021

**PQ 8927/21 (200) - To ask the Minister for Health if all those living on offshore islands who normally receive their general practitioner services on the islands will receive the Covid-19 vaccine on the islands in view of the difficulty for islanders accessing clinics on the main land; if all islanders over 65 years of age will be vaccinated at the same time rather than by five-year age cohorts given the relatively small population and the logistical difficulties in providing the vaccines for over 65 year olds on the islands; and if he will make a statement on the matter.**

Dear Deputy Ó Cuív,

Thank you for your representation. The HSE is rolling out the vaccine allocation in line with the National Immunisation Advisory Committee (NIAC) groupings. The vaccine programme commenced vaccination of group 3 of the allocation list on the 15<sup>th</sup> of February.

The HSE is committed to ensuring all over 70s patients gain access to the vaccine as required including those living in remote locations. To this end the HSE, working with a number of state agencies including the Defence Forces arranged for vaccines distributed to Inishmore & Innis Oir - Aran Islands off the coast of Galway and Arranmore Island off the coast of Donegal. Work is ongoing involving all relevant stakeholders to ensure the various arrangements are in place as required. Work is also ongoing to ensure that all remaining islands and remote locations are appropriately addressed and in this regard special arrangements have already been put in place to provide the vaccine to over 35 remote rural practices over the coming days.

In relation to five-year age cohorts the HSE worked closely with the IMO, as the representative body for General Practice, on developing an approach and plan to ensure safe and effective distribution and administration of the vaccine as early as possible to over 70s. The plan having been agreed with the IMO was incorporated in the overall HSE operational model and guidance, which was developed through a collaborative process involving a working group with senior HSE clinical and management input, together with IMO and ICGP representation.

I hope this provides you with assistance.

Yours sincerely

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Sharon Hayden  
General Manager  
Office of the CCO