

Réada Cronin TD  
Dáil Éireann,  
Leinster House,  
Dublin 2

10th March 2021

**PQ Ref: 9066/21- o ask the Minister for Health the systems in place under the Covid national vaccination strategy to address conscientious objection by doctors to vaccine administration; the reassurances his Department can give patients that this not-unexpected development has been factored into the planning, delivery and communication of that strategy; the guarantees he can give persons that conscientious objection will not impede them in their direct access to the vaccine locally; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Réada Cronin**

Deputy Cronin,

I refer to the above PQ received in our office for response.

GPs and Practice Nurses have contributed significantly in the delivery of COVID-19 vaccines. Last week saw the completion of the first 3 weeks of the over 70s GP Vaccination Programme, focused on vaccination of over 85s. In the programme to date over 1,300 GP practices have been involved representing more than 3,000 GPs, which has ensured the vast majority of 72,000 over 85 year olds have now been administered with their first dose of vaccine. In addition, GPs have already vaccinated a significant number of those in the 80 to 84 age cohort.

We are now moving into the next phase of the programme with a further 37,000 doses of vaccine being distributed this week (w/c/ 8 March) A very small number of practices, less than 30, are due to receive first delivery this week

The HSE is satisfied that GPs will continue to provide COVID-19 vaccines to the population in the delivery of the Vaccination Programme. To date only one GP has advised the HSE of the decision not to administer the COVID-19 vaccine and the HSE has put arrangements in place to ensure all patients registered to this GP will receive their vaccine. Additionally the HSE has put in place arrangements for people aged 70 years and over that are not registered with a GP to ensure they receive their vaccinations from a GP in their locality. Furthermore, Community Pharmacists will also have a role as the vaccination programme is extended to the general population.

Currently vaccine administration is limited only by the supply of approved vaccines and that is dependent on the manufacturers meeting their supply commitments. The HSE is continually engaged in creating an expanded vaccination infrastructure by managing a suite of vaccine products with different handling and delivery requirements. The continued priority at this time is to ensure the safe and effective rollout of the vaccine.

The HSE is fully committed to ensuring all over 70's patients gain access to the COVID-19 vaccine as required.

Regards



**National Director**  
Community Strategy & Planning

