

Deputy Fergus O'Dowd,
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Dublin 2.

4th March 2021

PQ Ref: PQ 3784/21 - To ask the Minister for Health the process by which general practitioners nationwide were invited to the mass vaccination centres during the weekend of 16 and 17 January 2021; if general practitioners were invited by county; if not, if they were randomly selected and so on; the process to ensure they are vaccinated as soon as is possible in cases in which they were not invited; and if he will make a statement on the matter. - Fergus O'Dowd

Dear Deputy O'Dowd,

I refer to your recent parliamentary question which was passed to the HSE for response.

The HSE is progressing with the implementation of the vaccination programme in line with the nationally agreed guidance established by the National Immunisation Advisory Committee (NIAC).

Given the very diverse nature of general practice, it was agreed from the outset that there would be a blended approach to ensuring vaccines are delivered to GPs and their practice teams. This blended approach includes nursing homes, community hospitals, acute hospitals and dedicated vaccine centres.

On Saturday 16th January 2021, vaccinations took place in dedicated vaccination centres in three locations nationally for GPs and Practice staff. A joint communication by the ICGP and the IMO outlined the process to GPs nationally for attending one of these dedicated vaccination centres, where GPs and practices were invited to register on a Covid-19 vaccine portal. Data was inputted by individual GPs and practices on this portal to enable the registration for an appointment. This included information on their location including county which was then used to assist in assigning the location of appointments for their vaccination.

Following the process outlined above and to address the remaining GPs and practice staff, four additional vaccinations centres were held in Dublin, Galway, Portlaoise and Sligo on Sunday 14th February 2021. The agreed process for the rollout of vaccines is now almost complete and work is on-going to vaccinate a small number of remaining GPs.

In relation to receiving the second dose of the vaccine, GPs who received their vaccination on the 16th January were completed on the 13th February. The second dose of Astra Zenaca vaccine is scheduled to be administered 12 weeks from the 14th February.

This entire process is being undertaken to ensure that all practices can deliver a full range of services to patients and that GP practices are as prepared as possible for the rollout of the vaccine to patients, in accordance with the priorities set out in the national COVID-19 vaccination programme, as approved by Government.

Yours sincerely,

Pat Healy

Community Strategy & Planning