Office of the National Director of Procurement
Health Business Services
Health Service Executive
Dr. Steevens' Hospital
Dublin 8
D08 W2A8

Oifig an Stiúrthóir Náisiúnta Soláthair
Seirbhísí Gnó Sláinte
Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Ospidéal Dr. Steevens'
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Deputy Róisín Shortall,
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

16/03/2021

RE PQ 13481/21

Question

To ask the Minister for Health the sequence of events including timelines that take place to transport vaccines from the point of arrival into the country on a plane or ship to the point of administration; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Róisín Shortall

Response

Deputy Shortall,

The Health Service Executive (HSE) has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response.

The delivery of vaccine from the point of manufacture to the nominated receiving point in country is the responsibility of the manufacturer.

The vaccine is received at the National Cold Chain Service and is then subject to a quality control process before being placed into the appropriate refrigeration unit. In the case of Pfizer BioNTech this is refrigeration of -75^{0}C Moderna -20^{O}c and AstraZeneca 2^{O}c to 8^{0}C.

Product receipt and distribution is complex process that requires high degree of planning, discipline, management, tracking and tracing. This complexity is added to with the fact that there are days where there is a need to receive and issue vaccines on the same day.

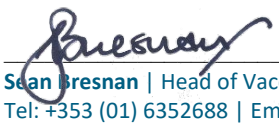
A robust receipting protocol is in place once a shipment arrives at the National Cold Chain Service. Upon receipt, all data loggers associated with the shipment are disabled. The product shipments are visually inspected to ensure all ordered quantities were received, and in good standing (no broken vials). The delivery is then subject to a receipt protocol which involves inter alia a labelling process, scanning process and date validation process. The QA and receipting process will vary depending on the characteristics of the vaccine but in any event is subject to GMP (good manufacturing process) standards with requires oversight by a qualified and competent QP (qualified person). Depending on the vaccine type, the safe disposal of dry ice pellets also applies.

Typical activity associated with GMP and GDP (good distribution practice) processes includes order alignment, pack down, order assignment, labelling, scanning, movement to active transport, transport and delivery.

Vaccines are generally available for distribution to vaccine administration sites within 24 hours of receipt of the vaccine at the National Cold Chain Service.

I trust this information is of assistance to you, but should you have any further queries please do not hesitate to contact the Office of the Head of Procurement on (01) 635 2688 or via sean.bresnan@hse.ie

Yours sincerely,



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