



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

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

BY EMAIL ONLY

Deputy Fergus O'Dowd TD

Dáil Éireann
Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2
Email:

06/04/2021

PQ 13894-21 To ask the Minister for Health the steps persons should take in cases in which they have a BMI above 40 and are included in the new cohort 4 but are not registered with a consultant or health team; the way such a person can ensure that they are registered for a vaccine if cohort 4 is advised that they will be contacted directly (details supplied); and if he will make a statement on the matter. -

Dear Deputy O'Dowd

Thank you for your representation. Now that safe and effective vaccines are available, we understand that people wish to be vaccinated as quickly as possible. The demand for vaccines has surpassed the available supply.

On Tuesday 30 March 2021, the government approved an update to the [COVID-19 Vaccination Allocation Strategy](#). This strategy sets out the groups to be prioritised for vaccination to best achieve the vaccination programme's objectives of preventing serious illness, hospitalisation and death. It is based on clinical, scientific and ethical frameworks produced by the National Immunisation Advisory Committee (NIAC) and the Department of Health.

The NIAC has now been able to more comprehensively identify those medical conditions and to distinguish between those which place a person at very high or high risk of severe disease if they contract the virus. Medical conditions and the magnitude of the risk they pose will continue to be monitored and periodically reviewed.

The cohort currently being vaccinated (Group 4) are those aged 16-69 and at very high risk of severe illness and death. Vaccination of this group began in March.

The HSE is working with Acute Hospitals on the roll out of the COVID 19 vaccines for those patients aligned to Group 4 as determined by NIAC. Communication issued to all hospitals, both public and private, to identify eligible patients for vaccination within Group 4. Where patients meet the criteria and are under the care of a hospital then they will be contacted via that hospital. Where patients are no longer under hospital care, the HSE is engaging with General Practice to identify those patients.

It is important to emphasise that vaccination is only one part of our response to the prevention of COVID-19 infection. People who are vaccinated need to continue with all the public health measures that have been proven to reduce the risk of infection, i.e., limiting our social contacts, physical distancing, wearing a mask, hand hygiene, cough etiquette and avoiding non-essential travel until a sufficiently large proportion of the population are immune

I hope this provides you with assistance,

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Sharon Hayden".

Sharon Hayden
General Manager
Office of the CCO