



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

Office of the Chief Clinical Officer  
Dr Steevens' Hospital|Steevens' Lane|Dublin 8|D08 W2A8  
email: [cco@hse.ie](mailto:cco@hse.ie)

Oifig an Phríomhoifigigh Cliniciúil  
Ospidéal Dr Steevens|Lána Steevens|Baile Átha Cliath 8|D08 W2A8

**BY EMAIL ONLY**

**Deputy Cathal Crowe**

Dáil Éireann  
Leinster House  
Kildare Street  
Dublin 2  
Email:

06/04/2021

**PQ 14208/21 To ask the Minister for Health if it will be ensured that a supply of the Covid-19 vaccine is ring-fenced for those over 80 years of age with underlying conditions who are facing long-term hospital stays, for example, cancer patients; and if he will make a statement on the matter. –**

Dear Deputy Crowe,

Thank you for your query.

The objective of the vaccination programme for SARS CoV-2 is to ensure equitable access to a safe and effective vaccine with the goals of limiting mortality and morbidity from COVID-19, protecting healthcare capacity and enabling social and economic activity. In December 2020, the Government agreed and published a COVID-19 vaccination strategy and implementation plan developed by the High-Level Task Force on COVID-19 Vaccination with input on priority groupings from the National Immunisation Advisory Committee (NIAC) and the National Public Health Emergency Team (NPHE). It provides the provisional sequencing for groups to be vaccinated based on clinical priorities and an ethical framework to minimise harm, and maintain fairness, moral equality and reciprocity. This was updated on February 23 2021 and subsequently on March 30 2021. The HSE is implementing the COVID-19 vaccination programme in line with the Government policy.

The priority from the start of this programme has been to first vaccinate and therefore protect the most vulnerable amongst us; those who are most likely to have a poor outcome or die if they contract the virus, which is strongly age-related.

As of Sunday April 4 2021, 936,087 vaccines have been administered nationally.

It is important to emphasise that vaccination is only one part of our response to the prevention of COVID-19 infection and that we must continue to adhere to public health guidance, 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 is of assistance to you.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James Walsh". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Pp

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Sharon Hayden  
General Manager  
Office of the CCO