

**Corporate Affairs Department**

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**30 November, 2021**

Deputy Brid Smith

Dáil Éireann

Leinster House

Kildare Street

Dublin 2

**Re: PQ ref 55529/21** – *To ask the Minister for Health the reason St. James' Hospital's oncology department is not providing Covid-19 booster shots to its most vulnerable cancer patients; the reason this cohort of patients that have not been sent for booster shots elsewhere despite being anxious to receive the extra vaccine as soon as possible; when these patients will receive the booster vaccination; and if he will make a statement on the matter.*

Dear Deputy Smith,

St James's Hospital has followed the HSE directive; *Definition of Immunocompromised Relevant to Implementation of NIAC Guidance on Extended Primary Vaccination, Issued 30 August 2021 taking account of September 2021 update to Table 5a.2 of Chapter 5a of Immunisation Guidelines for Ireland, Updated 08 October 2021.*

The hospital's outpatients were identified using this guidance, including cancer patients, and they were referred to Citywest for a third dose of primary Covid-19 vaccination to be administered in line with the national protocols.

Immunocompromised inpatients in St James's Hospital are routinely identified for additional doses as part of their admission, and are offered vaccination, once clinically appropriate. Planned admissions to the hospital are offered Covid-19 vaccination prior to their admission, once deemed appropriate.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Noel Gorman', written in a cursive style.

Mr Noel Gorman

Chief Operations Officer