

2nd Dec. 2021

Deputy Roisin Shortall,
Dáil Éireann,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2

Issued via email to: roisin.shortall@oireachtas.ie

PQ Number: 58023/21

Question: To ask the Minister for Health the advice and the plans for the provision of Covid-19 booster vaccinations to persons in their 60s who received a vaccine (Astra Zeneca) originally; the optimum timing of these boosters; the arrangements for scheduling these appointments; the locations being used; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Shortall,

I refer to the above Parliamentary Question which has been referred by the Minister for Health to the Health Service Executive for direct response.

The policy regarding the roll out of the additional doses of COVID-19 vaccine is determined by NIAC and the Department of Health.

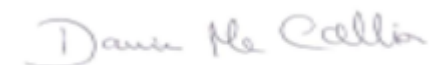
In October NIAC recommended that a booster dose of Comirnaty (Pfizer) is given to all those aged 60 to 79 years who have completed their primary course with any COVID-19 vaccine. The booster dose should be given after an interval of six months (or at least five months) following the last dose of any authorised COVID-19 vaccine, or any time thereafter. This means the time to complete an age cohort is dependent on the person's original vaccine completion date. Developed in line with the principles of maximising uptake, optimising accessibility for people, speed of completion, and utilisation of available capacity, the plan to roll out these recommendations commenced w/c 1st November.

The 60-69 age group (c. 470,000 in scope) are now being vaccinated through vaccination centres. There has been c. 118,000 administered in vaccination centres to date (29th November). The expectation is that this group will be substantially completed by the end December 2021.

Currently we have been offering appointments at vaccination centres to the 60-69 years old cohort but are moving to a combination of appointments and walk-in model to ensure convenience to the public, and to maximise use of our capacity. The majority of those aged 60 – 69 are reaching the 5 month eligibility threshold over the coming weeks. We will be offering them an appointment in a vaccination centre. They may also attend a walk in clinic, their local participating pharmacy or their GP if they would prefer. For details of those please see the HSE website.

I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely,



Damien McCallion
National Director
National Lead Test & Trace and Vaccination Programme