



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

8th November 2021.

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Request Type: Direct Written Response to david.cullinane@oireachtas.ie with a copy to pquestions@hse.ie for national database close off.

Dear Deputy Cullinane,

Please note that we are addressing both booster and immunocompromised in this reply as your questions could refer to either.

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

Currently the advice with the HSE is to provide the 3rd additional primary dose for those with immunocompromise associated with a suboptimal response to vaccines and to provide a booster to all those who have completed their primary course with any vaccine type who are aged 80 and older, live in LTCFs aged 65 and older as well as those aged 60- to 79-year-olds.

The purpose of the additional COVID-19 vaccine dose, as outlined by NIAC, is to address the following possible issues:

1. Inadequate response to primary vaccine series
2. Waning immunity following vaccination
3. Reduced protection against variant(s) of concern

NIAC's guidelines recommend that an additional mRNA vaccine dose should be given to those aged 12 and older with immunocompromise associated with a suboptimal response to vaccines who have completed their primary course, regardless of whether the primary course was of an mRNA or an adenoviral vector vaccine. This is an extended primary vaccination course. The additional vaccine dose should be given after a minimum interval of two months following the last dose of an authorised COVID-19 vaccine. This is different from a booster vaccination which may need to be given separately if such a recommendation is made by NIAC in the future.

The programme to deliver the 3rd primary dose for those with immunocompromise went live w/o 27th September 2021. Those eligible will be identified by their Hospital Consultants and called in for their appointment in a Vaccination Centre.

As of 31st October, ca.43k patients referred by their Hospital Consultant as meeting the clinical criteria have received their 3rd Primary Dose of COVID-19 vaccine primarily through Vaccination Centres and

GPs with a total ca73.k identified so far. Noting the significant challenges around the identification of these patients it is planned to complete the majority programme over the period of 6 weeks, but it is expected that some will fall outside that timeline.

As for the Booster Programme NIAC's advice is to administer a COVID-19 Vaccine Booster dose to all those who have completed their primary course with any vaccine type who are aged 80 and older, live in LTCFs aged 65 and older as well as those aged 60- to 79-year-olds. NIAC advice recommends that people should be administered their booster vaccine after six months but a minimum period of five months. This means the time to complete an age cohort is dependent on the person's original vaccine completion date. In line with this, the Booster Vaccination Programme for in scope groups is progressing as follows

1. **Over 65 in Long Term Residential Facilities** - Residents aged 65 and over in Long Term Residential Care facilities (ca.30k in scope) commenced 4 Oct 2021. Vaccination Teams are operating in all areas of the country and have administered ca. 23k doses up to 31 Oct. Some facilities will need to be revisited due to outbreaks and eligibility according to their initial primary dose.
2. **Over 80s** - GPs are administering additional doses to over 80s (ca. 161k in scope) in Community with ca. 129k administered up to 31 Oct and on track to substantially complete this group by mid-November.
3. **Over 80s Housebound** - The Covid-19 Home Vaccination service to housebound persons has been expanded to include persons eligible to receive an extended primary vaccination or a booster vaccination and will run up until mid-November
4. **70-79 age group** - The 70-79 age group (ca. 336k in scope) vaccinated through the GP channel. Beginning this week (w/c 1 Nov), the expectation is that this group will be substantially completed within 4-5 weeks.
5. **60-69 group** - The 60-69 group (ca. 475k in scope) vaccinated through Vaccination Centres. Beginning this week, the expectation is that this group will be substantially completed by the end of December 2021.

The timeline in the Booster Programme are primarily driven by a person's original vaccine completion date, unlike the original primary Vaccination Programme, which did not have such a constraint.

I trust this information is of assistance to you but if you have any queries or require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Damien McCallion
National Director, HSE