



Príomhoifigeach Cliniciúil  
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## BY EMAIL ONLY

Deputy Bríd Smith  
Dáil Éireann  
Leinster House  
Kildare Street  
Dublin 2

23<sup>rd</sup> March 2022

**PQ 14041/22- Deputy Bríd Smith- To ask the Minister for Health his views on the fact that medically vulnerable persons are still at risk of serious Covid-19 disease especially now that all restrictions have been lifted; if he will allocate the highest priority to high risk and very high risk individuals in the guidance regarding the allocation of new antiviral and antibody treatments against Covid-19; if he will systematically involve persons with lived experience of managing a chronic and or rare conditions in key decision-making processes; if he will provide a tailored plan and engage in direct communication with medically vulnerable individuals especially those with a chronic and or rare conditions to address existing service and treatment challenges during Covid-19 and in the aftermath of the lifting of public health restrictions; and if he will make a statement on the matter.**

Dear Deputy Smith,

Thank you for your representation.

The COVID-19 Therapeutics programme includes a Therapeutics Advisory Group co-chaired by two co-leads of the HSE's National Infectious Diseases Programme. The purpose of this advisory group is to provide clinical advice and recommendations on the use of novel COVID-19 therapeutic medications. The group has developed a [prioritisation framework](#) and clinical guidelines to aid decision-making in the prescribing of these COVID-19 therapeutics. The prioritisation framework includes considerations of equity and ethics, and outlines that those who are at high-risk or very high-risk of experiencing severe COVID-19 symptoms, hospitalisation, or ICU support, should be prioritised.

In addition, the COVID-19 Therapeutics Working Group has been engaging with patient Advocacy Groups to ensure open communications and inclusion in the programme's progress. These engagements are ongoing and occurring on a regular basis. As a result of these interactions there have recently been two patient representatives nominated to join the Therapeutics Advisory Group and the Working Group. These two nominees will have the opportunity to provide input to planning and contribute to decision-making.

The HSE's communications web page for COVID-19 Therapeutics can be found [here](#). This web page addresses patients with chronic and/or rare conditions who are prioritised for novel COVID-19 therapeutics.



Yours sincerely

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

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Sharon Hayden  
Office of the CCO