

**13<sup>th</sup> June 2022**

Deputy Pa Daly,  
Dáil Éireann,  
Kildare Street,  
Dublin 2

*Issued via email to: [pa.daly@oireachtas.ie](mailto:pa.daly@oireachtas.ie)*

**PQ Number: 27804-22**

**Question: To ask the Minister for Health his views on the accessibility of the Covid-19 booster programme, especially in relation to appointments made through off-line methods.**

Dear Deputy Daly,

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

Throughout each phase of the Covid-19 Vaccination Programme, the HSE has sought to provide a broad range of initiatives to ensure information, access channels and accessibility options were available. These initiatives included -

- **Communications** - A high level of public communications and advertising at a national and local level has sought to inform the public regarding vaccines on topics including eligibility, how to book a vaccine etc. This communications effort was supported by newspapers, radio advertisements, media statements and local interviews as well as online options including an updated HSE website and social media.
- **Vaccination Channels** - Access has been provided for Primary, First Booster and Second Booster doses through vaccination channels of hospitals, Central Vaccination Centres (CVC), GPs and pharmacies across the country with CVCs operating during hours that ensure accessibility to the public through self-scheduling and weekend clinics. Localised temporary and pop-up clinics have also been established throughout the programme.
- **Additional Channels** - There have been a number of additional vaccination pathways put in place specifically for other groups including Roma, Travellers and homeless along with a Home Vaccination Service for administration directly in a person's place of residence for housebound and those who are in residential care
- **Means of Booking** (online) - The HSE website<sup>1</sup> outlines instructions to make an appointment at a vaccination centre, locations of participating pharmacies as well as dates and times for CVC walk-in vaccination clinics.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www2.hse.ie/screening-and-vaccinations/covid-19-vaccine/get-the-vaccine/booking/>



With respect to offline options when considering accessibility, specifically focussing on booking appointments -

- **HSE Live Freephone** - The public may freephone HSE Live on 1800 700 700 where information can be provided regarding the vaccination channels available and the appropriate booking method for each channel. By calling HSE Live the agent can book a person their appointment and/ or understand the appointments that are available over the following week and those that are available on the day of booking.
- **GP/ Pharmacy Direct Phone Option** - The public may phone their local participating GP or pharmacy to book a vaccination appointment directly. If they are not participating themselves, they will guide the caller to other access options.
- **HSE Live Direct SMS Campaign** - The HSE has operated an SMS campaign designed to notify those who are eligible for a first or second Booster detailing their vaccination options in addition to those that are becoming eligible following a confirmed COVID positive test.
- **HSE Live Proactive Phone Contact** - The HSE is currently in the process of contacting all individuals eligible for a second booster dose, that got a Booster 1 with a GP who are no longer offering Covid-19 vaccinations, to inform them of other access options in their area.

I trust the above information is of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Damien McCallion".

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