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To ask the Minister for Health if he will outline the procedure in place for ensuring that NIAC recommendations are put into practice; the procedure to be followed to ensure the procurement of vaccines, as recommended by NIAC; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Bernard J. Durkan

Dear Deputy Durkan,

I refer to the above representation (rep) which you submitted to the Health Service Executive for direct response following a partial response from the Immunisation and Infectious Disease Policy Unit within the Department of Health on 8th November 2022.

In Ireland, the National Immunisation Advisory Committee (NIAC) makes recommendations to the Department of Health about immunisation programmes. If the Department of Health and Minister for Health accept NIAC recommendations they provide funding to the HSE and instruct that an immunisation programme be implemented.

On behalf of the HSE, the National Immunisation Office (NIO) is responsible for vaccine procurement, storage and distribution, the development of standards and training for healthcare professionals (HCPs) and communication materials for the public for all National Immunisation Programmes in line with Department of Health Immunisation Policy.

There are several cross-functional teams within the NIO who work together to fulfill the above roles.

Under my leadership, the pharmacy team manages the vaccine budget. Working with HSE procurement the NIO determines the technical aspects of vaccine procurement exercises.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Lucy Jessop
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