



Oifig na Seirbhísí Sláinte Meabhrach
Cúram Sláinte Pobail Corcaigh & Ciarraí

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Deputy Neasa Hourigan,
Dáil Éireann,
Dublin 2

PQ ref 29589/23

“To ask the Minister for Health the origins of emails sent by clerical staff of the Cork HSE mental health services on 7 January 2021 offering the possibility of priority Covid vaccines to non-patient facing staff, including several senior HSE managers (details supplied); the HSE managers responsible for making these offers of priority vaccines to colleagues; if the CEO of the HSE is aware of this possible breach of the vaccine scheduling protocol in CHO4; and if he will make a statement on the matter.”

Dear Deputy Hourigan,

The Health Service Executive have been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question, which you submitted for the Minister for Health for a response.

The National Covid-19 Vaccination Strategy was informed by The Provisional Vaccine Allocation Groups published by government on December 8th 2020 which outlined that residents and staff in Long Term Residential Care Facilities for Older People aged 65 years and older and all frontline Healthcare Workers would be the initial groups identified for vaccination. Staff in residential facilities for older persons were vaccinated on site in the facility along with the residents in the initial phase which commenced in late December 2020.

All other healthcare workers were offered sequenced appointments in centralised vaccination clinics set up specifically to vaccinate staff from late December 2020 onwards. This healthcare worker programme ran concurrently with the initial residential programme described above and its subsequent expansions.

A key principle, as set out in national HSE guidance on the delivery of the vaccination programme is that no doses of the vaccine should be wasted i.e. that all available doses within a vial should be used. The guidance also stated that centers should establish standby lists of healthcare workers who were available at short notice and randomly selected from the lists for vaccination where the alternative was that the vaccine dose expired.

I trust the above clarifies the queries raised.

Yours sincerely,

Ms. Julie O' Neill
Interim Head of Service
Mental Health Services
Cork Kerry Community Healthcare