



Oifig an Stiúrthóra Cúnta Náisiúnta
Clár Cúraim Pobail Feabhsaithe &
Conarthaí Príomhchúraim
Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte

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Deputy Bacik
Dáil Eireann,
Leinster House,
Dublin 2.

14th May, 2024

PQ: 11705/24

To ask the Minister for Health his plans to include pharmacists in the MMR catch-up programme, given the current GP shortage, which may delay the provision of the service; and if he will make a statement on the matter. -Ivana Bacik

Dear Deputy Bacik,

I refer to your parliamentary question, which was passed to the HSE for response.

A comprehensive plan in response to the rise in measles cases in the UK and Europe, including an MMR catch-up vaccination programme, has been approved by government and is being implemented by the HSE. Within this plan, agreement has been reached with the IMO that GPs will undertake a proactive catch-up campaign for those aged up to under 18 years old, as well as providing opportunistic vaccination of those aged 18 years and over.

GPs have been providing opportunistic MMR catch-up vaccinations since 8th February, and have commenced the proactive campaign since 6th March. GPs and practice nurses are already trained experts in delivering MMR vaccination within the Primary Childhood Immunisation Programme and are best placed to deliver this catch-up programme in a swift and efficient manner. As of 25th April, based on claims received, over 1,400 MMR catch-up vaccines have been administered in General Practice.

Within the plan, MMR vaccines will be made available to other priority groups such as young adults and those in 3rd level education, health and care workers, and communities with lower vaccination uptake, through community-based HSE clinics and mobile teams. HSE mobile teams will also be able to provide support through pop-up clinics as required in areas where vaccination uptake is particularly low or where GP capacity is limited.

Community Pharmacists currently play a significant role in both the COVID-19 and Influenza vaccination programmes, providing access and choice through the delivery services in local communities. The HSE are currently delivering the COVID-19 Spring booster programme which commenced 22nd April in line with NIAC recommendations. Community Pharmacies are supporting effective delivery of this programme.

I trust this is of assistance.

Yours sincerely,

Geraldine Crowley,
Assistant National Director,
Enhanced Community Care Programme &
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