



Oifig an Stiúirthóra Náisiúnta Straiteis Pobail agus Pleanála
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Office of National Director Community Strategy and Planning
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Title: Vaccination of housebound over 70s population

March 3rd, 2021

Dear Colleague,

Many thanks for your hard work and dedication in progressing the vaccination of the over 70s. As of February 26th, 2021 we have now vaccinated 45,744 people over 85 years. Within this cohort there will be a small sub-cohort of patients that are housebound and are not normally able to attend the GP practice / Primary Care Centre for clinical reasons and for whom this difficulty with attendance cannot be resolved by providing transport.

As you know the characteristics of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine and its stability travel time restrictions make home visits for vaccination extremely challenging. However, we are ensuring that everyone in cohort 3 of the government's provisional allocation grouping is offered a vaccine and no one is left behind.

In determining the safest and most efficient way to vaccinate this small sub-cohort of patients we have engaged with GP representatives, Public Health Nurses, the National Ambulance Service and HSE Community Operations. We very much appreciate your support in identifying this sub-cohort and referring those patients for whom you are unable to make a home visit to vaccinate to the National Ambulance Service who will help vaccinate housebound patients in a safe, timely and efficient manner.

Unfortunately, the time required to update the Healthlink system to generate a referral directly to NAS would delay the vaccination of this high risk cohort in line with our 2-week delivery target, therefore the best alternative means to compile the list for NAS is through the use of a bespoke NAS excel referral form.

In order to compile the list of patients that require the assistance of NAS to vaccinate could you please:

- Review your patients over 70 and assess which patients, even if transport is provided, would not be able to attend the practice and for whom you would not be able to make a home visit to vaccinate. If you do not have all of this information easily available, you can commence with those patients over 80 years in the first instance. Please confirm this list



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with your local Public Health Nurse service and update as necessary to reflect any further information they may have.

- Complete the attached NAS excel Referral Form. Full descriptions of the data fields required are outlined in the excel instructions
- **An accurate Eircode is essential to ensure that the vaccinators reach the patient in a timely manner, particularly given the administration timeframes to be complied with**
- The Referral Form should be emailed to homevaccinationNAS@hse.ie **no later than 5pm on March 8th, 2021**
- Please contact each patient you add to the NAS excel referral form to:
 - (1) Confirm they wish to proceed with vaccination
 - (2) Inform them that NAS will be vaccinating them in their homes
 - (3) Confirm whether NAS should contact them or their nominated next of kin to schedule the appointment
 - (4) Address any concerns they may have about the vaccine and the consent process
- On the day your patient(s) has been vaccinated you will be contacted by a member of the NAS team to inform you that the vaccination has taken place and whether there were any immediate concerns or side effects during the post vaccination observation period
- NAS will schedule your patient's second vaccine dose for 28 days later

Once again, I would like to thank you for your hard work and dedication to our national Vaccination Programme, without you we would not be in a position to be vaccinating at speed our most vulnerable and protecting them from serious illness and death.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Pat Healy', written over a horizontal line.

Pat Healy
National Director
Community Strategy & Planning