

Chief Medical Officer
Dr Michael McBride



Department of
Health

An Roinn Sláinte

Männystrie O Poustie

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HSS (MD) 77/2020

For Action:

Chief Executives, Public Health Agency/Health and Social Care Board/HSC Trusts/NIAS

Please see attached full addressee list

Our Ref: **HSS (MD) 77/2020**
Date: **17 November 2020**

Dear Colleague

**EXPRESSION OF INTEREST TO ALL REGISTERED
HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS TO BECOME SESSIONAL
VACCINATORS TO HELP IMPLEMENT THE FORTHCOMING COVID-19
VACCINATION PROGRAMME**

ACTION REQUIRED

Chief Executives must ensure that this information is drawn to the attention of all staff.

Introduction

1. The purpose of this letter is to strongly support the expression of Interest to all Health Care Professionals (eg pharmacy, nursing, dentist and allied health professionals) to become sessional vaccinators to help implement the forthcoming COVID-19 vaccination programme. We would also ask managers to ensure that, where necessary, these individuals can be released from their normal duties when required.
2. You will have seen the news recently which indicated that one of the COVID-19 vaccines, which is due to be used in a forthcoming vaccination programme, was shown to be 90% effective with no safety concerns. While this is very welcome news it should be noted that the vaccine still has to be considered and approved by the MHRA. Another potential vaccine is also going through the same process and its safety and efficacy data is expected to be submitted to MHRA within the next few weeks.
3. It is therefore very possible that a COVID-19 vaccine(s) will become available for use across the UK by early December. Plans

have been drawn up to ensure a vaccination programme can be implemented quickly once sufficient supplies of the vaccine(s) have been received into Northern Ireland.

4. The vaccination programme will involve a mixture of delivery models and these will include: Mobile teams for care home residents and staff as well as support for district nursing for house bound patients; Enhanced Trust Occupational Health staff teams for the mass vaccination of staff; and a GP based programme which will see GPs operating in cluster formation vaccination sites with additional support.
5. In order to be able to implement these plans it is essential that we have adequate vaccinators who can be trained up and called upon when required as well as health care assistants and admin staff to support the programme. Those already trained as Peer Flu Vaccinators will only require an additional module. We would therefore strongly urge all staff to seriously consider this request and for their managers to try to accommodate all requests from staff to be released as necessary.

Yours sincerely



Michael McBride
Chief Medical Officer

Charlotte McArdle
Chief Nursing Officer

CIRCULATION LIST

Director of Public Health/Medical Director, Public Health Agency (*for onward distribution to all relevant health protection staff*)
Assistant Director Public Health (Health Protection), Public Health Agency
Director of Nursing, Public Health Agency
Assistant Director of Pharmacy and Medicines Management, Health and Social Care Board (*for onward distribution to Community Pharmacies*)
Directors of Pharmacy HSC Trusts
Director of Social Care and Children, HSCB
Family Practitioner Service Leads, Health and Social Care Board (*for cascade to GP Out of Hours services*)
Medical Directors, HSC Trusts (*for onward distribution to all Consultants, Occupational Health Physicians and School Medical Leads*)
Nursing Directors, HSC Trusts (*for onward distribution to all Community Nurses, and Midwives*)
Directors of Children's Services, HSC Trusts
RQIA (*for onward transmission to all independent providers including independent hospitals*)

Medicines Management Pharmacists, HSC Board (*for cascade to prescribing advisers*)

Regional Medicines Information Service, Belfast HSC Trust

Regional Pharmaceutical Procurement Service, Northern HSC Trust

Professor Donna Fitzsimons, Head of School of Nursing and Midwifery QUB

Professor Sonja McIlpatrick, Head of School of Nursing, University of Ulster

Caroline Lee, CEC

Donna Gallagher, Open University

Professor Paul McCarron, Head of School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, UU

Professor Colin McCoy, Head of School, School of Pharmacy, QUB

Professor Colin Adair, Director of the NI Centre for Pharmacy Learning and Development, QUB

Joe Brogan, Assistant Director of Integrated Care, HSCB

Donncha O'Carolan, HSCB (*for distribution to all General Dental Practitioners*)

Raymond Curran, Head of Ophthalmic Services, HSCB (*for distribution to Community Optometrists*)

Trade Union Side

This letter is available on the Department of Health website at
<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/topics/professional-medical-and-environmental-health-advice/hssmd-letters-and-urgent-communications>