

National Immunisation Advisory Committee

MEETING DETAILS	
Date (Venue)	25.01.2021 (Zoom)

ITEM	SUMMARY
Introductions	New lay members introduced and welcomed.
Statement of Interests	Nil declared to agenda items today. Annual COI forms for submission by 29.01.2021.
SARS-CoV-2 (Covid)	<p>Variants of concern COVID-19 variants discussed including: B.1.1.7/UK, South Africa and Brazil variants. UK variant increasingly seen in Ireland, and new reports suggest there may be some increased morbidity/mortality with this strain. South African strain found in small number of cases in Ireland. No P.1 (Brazil) strain found yet. No change to vaccine recommendations based on current information on new variants.</p> <p>Vaccination programme Vaccine rollout: over 75,000 healthcare workers have received one dose of Pfizer/BioNTech vaccination and most long-term care facilities have been visited. Small volume of Moderna vaccine distributed successfully through GP services.</p> <p>Chapter 5a To add Astra-Zeneca vaccine information once this is approved. Clarified that lymphadenopathy as a side effect to Pfizer/BioNTech related to local lymphadenopathy on side of body where vaccine given. To update allergy advice on chapter in view of potential cross-reactivity between polyethylene glycol (in both mRNA COVID-19 vaccines) and polysorbate 80. Allergy queries that arise to be referred first to National Immunisation Office (NIO). The FAQ on allergy related to COVID-19 vaccines published and will address many queries. Possibility of developing triage mechanism for potential referrals to allergy/immunology specialist to be explored so that vaccinations would not be unnecessarily delayed.</p> <p>Pregnancy FAQ for pregnancy in place and will be updated as information emerges. Discussed use of non-replicative viral vector vaccines in pregnancy – no current known reason not to use them but further studies being undertaken.</p>

ITEM	SUMMARY
	<p>Priority Groupings</p> <p>Next steps Prioritisation workstream Discussions ongoing within working group, including how to incorporate vulnerable groups. Open Safely Group (https://opensafely.org/) provides data on risk factors for COVID-19 (https://opensafely.org/assets/age_interactions_report_v1.2.pdf)</p>
Influenza	<p>Working Group lead confirmed Recommendations for next year to be reviewed. NIAC recommendation for LAIV for 2-17-year olds to remain unchanged. “Recommend and offer” pilot suggested, where maternity hospital would be able to give influenza vaccinations, to improve uptake in pregnancy.</p>
BCG	<p>Working Group lead confirmed No update – to follow up with lead and progress report</p>
Human Papilloma Virus (HPV)	<p>Most areas started school vaccinations this year. Some disruption due to COVID-19 with school closures and redeployment of staff. Aim to catch up on HPV vaccinations over the summer</p>
Primary immunisation schedule	<p>Work currently deferred. Working group lead confirmed</p>
Meningococcal Infection	<p>Work currently deferred. Working group lead confirmed</p>
Varicella Zoster Virus	<p>Work currently deferred. Working group lead confirmed</p>
Hepatitis B	<p>No update</p>
Chapter updates	<p>Efforts diverted to keep COVID-19 chapter updated. Small updates to Ch 2 and Ch 3 have been made for consistency across the chapters.</p>
Vaccine Injury Redress Scheme	<p>Verbal reassurance from DOH received that work in this regard is ongoing. Formal response to NIAC’s letter emphasising the importance of this has not been received.</p>