

Over 700 pharmacies to administer Pfizer Vaccine



10 August 2021 – The number of community pharmacies administering the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine will double this week to over 700 nationwide as the HSE extends vaccination to 12-15 year olds, in addition to people aged 16 years and upwards, the Irish Pharmacy Union has confirmed.

As the national vaccination programme enters a new phase, community pharmacists continue to play a major role in the fight against COVID-19, administering close to 200,000 vaccines to date, since June when Minister Donnelly announced the expansion of the programme to pharmacies.

Some 320 pharmacies had already been administering Pfizer vaccines, among almost 1,000 pharmacies who have also been offering the Janssen vaccine. Over 700 pharmacies had originally indicated their availability to administer the Pfizer vaccine and from this week on these will now receive stock to begin vaccinations.

It is anticipated that the Pfizer vaccine will now continue as the mainstay of the pharmacy-based campaign against the virus. However, any remaining stocks of the successfully administered Janssen vaccine can be administered to adults (over 18) in participating pharmacies until they

are used up.

The HSE will be providing detailed information to parents and the public in relation to this programme. Vaccination centres will continue to be a primary location for the administration of the vaccines to 12-15 year olds and pharmacies will strongly augment this, ensuring appropriate geographical access taking account of distance from vaccination centres.

IPU Secretary General Darragh O'Loughlin said, "It makes a lot of sense for parents to be able to bring their children to a local participating pharmacy for vaccination, bringing children to a familiar environment which provides reassurance and convenience for families and young people and reducing the pressure to travel to a vaccination centre.

"Pharmacies are now at the vanguard of the vaccination programme. The HSE is providing appropriate operational guidance including procedures for parental consent where pharmacists will be on hand to provide information and advice as they administer the vaccine. Pharmacists are delighted to be making this essential service both accessible and convenient within their local communities, where they have always played an integral role in helping people to stay healthy and well, and it is wonderful to see such a positive community response in return.

"Over half of the Irish population lives within one kilometre of a pharmacy and 85% live within 5km. This enhanced local availability of the Pfizer vaccine will provide a further major incentive for people to be vaccinated and this in turn will help Ireland turn the corner in the fight against COVID-19."