

30 March 2021



Dear Member,

It has come to our attention that some members of the HSE vaccine helpline have provided incorrect information to registrants regarding their eligibility to register and receive a Covid19 vaccination under the 2f category in the HSE portal. As a result, some members of the profession may have completed the registration process in good faith believing that they were eligible to receive the vaccine under this schedule. However, this is not correct. We have been advised by the HSE that Vets and Veterinary Nurses are not included in this category at this time.

It is our understanding that the veterinary profession falls under category 10 of the vaccination programme. We have made representations to the Minister of Health and the Minister of Agriculture on behalf of the veterinary profession as a whole to highlight our risks and the need for a faster approach to vaccinating the veterinary community. We have yet to receive a formal response to our requests for a change in designation and until such time we must maintain the position that as a group we continue to be classified as schedule 10 on the vaccination rollout plan.

It is the position of the IVNA that unless a member of the profession falls into category 1-9 and registered under such a category for personal reasons, they must wait for the category 10 rollout. Should a member of the veterinary profession receive an appointment for the category 2f which was incorrectly given due to erroneous information circulating, they should attempt to cancel this appointment as the profession does not meet this criteria (See description of category 2f below). We have been informed by the HSE vaccination helpline that contact details for all vaccination centres are not available and if an individual is unable to make direct contact with their vaccination centre, they are simply not to present for the vaccination.

“Frontline healthcare workers

Frontline healthcare workers (HCWs) in direct patient contact roles (including vaccinators) or who risk exposure to bodily fluids or aerosols and those providing services essential to the vaccination programme.*

Rationale

At very high or high risk of exposure and/or transmission. In the first wave over 30% cases were in healthcare workers.

Ethical Principles

The principle of minimising harm is realised, as benefit will accrue to healthcare workers and the patients they care for, producing a multiplier effect. Society also has a reciprocity-based duty to protect those who bear additional risks to safeguard the welfare of others.”

Should the schedule of vaccinations change we will notify our members of updates as they become available to us.

We appreciate the great deal of stress the community is experiencing working through the pandemic and the sense of urgency for national vaccination. However, we must uphold the integrity of our profession, follow the rollout programme as presented and avail of our vaccinations at a time when we are eligible to do so.

While we continue to advocate for a speedy vaccination rollout for the veterinary profession as a community for support staff, veterinary nurses and veterinarians; we must support each other in these difficult times by creating a safe and healthy working environment and abide by public health guidelines.

Yours sincerely

IVNA Committee