

FROM THE MINISTER OF HEALTH



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**ACTIVATION OF MILITARY AID TO CIVIL AUTHORITY (MACA) REQUESTING
MILITARY ASSISTANCE FOR DELIVERY OF THE COVID-19 VACCINATION
PROGRAMME**

I wish to inform you that I have approved a decision to activate Military Aid to Civil Authority (MACA) requesting military assistance to Health and Social Care (HSC) in Northern Ireland. A MACA has been submitted to request assistance to support our COVID-19 Mass Vaccination Programme.

The COVID-19 vaccination programme is accelerating in the coming weeks, with the expectation that it will significantly ramp up from the end of March to the end of the summer. In light of the requirement to meet our regional vaccination objectives, a considerable ask has been put to our Nursing, Midwifery and AHP workforce to further its contribution to the programme through the release of additional staff on a rota basis. In addition, further support has been sought from healthcare professionals and support workers identified through the HSC Workforce Appeal and healthcare students.

A total of 100 military staff have been requested to support the requirements of the programme, made up of 100 Combat Medical Technicians (CMTs). A total of 80 CMTs are to be stationed at The SSE Arena, Belfast, which will become Northern Ireland's largest vaccination centre and a key component in ensuring that vaccination objectives are met. It is anticipated that staff will operate within the centre from 22 March 2021 – 31 May 2021. The remaining 20 CMTs will be stationed at Seven Towers Mass Vaccination Site, Ballymena.

Working for a Healthier People

This decision has not been taken lightly and all possible alternatives have been thoroughly explored and implemented. The additional military expertise and assistance is vital to ensure that we achieve our regional vaccination requirements and address the most pressing challenge facing public health in Northern Ireland.

Personal Data

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Minister of Health

