



Northern  
Ireland  
Office

## MINISTER ZAHAWI CALL - VACCINES ROLLOUT

07 JANUARY 2021

15:45-16:15

### 1. Requirement for Pre-Departure Testing

**Steer:** Minister Zahawi will chair a meeting with the Secretaries of State of the Territorial Offices to discuss the rollout of vaccines in the Devolved Administrations. The meeting is likely to cover both the delivery of vaccines to DAs, and the deployment of vaccines in each. You may wish to raise that vaccine deployment in NI has been slower than initially forecasted.

We expect a focus to be on the availability and publication of data on both delivery and deployment. The SOS for Scotland is expected to push for the regular publication of data on vaccines delivered to Scotland. We recommend that you support this approach to the publication of data.

Minister Zahawi may wish to discuss a draft letter, to be sent to each of the DAs, that sets out information on shares of vaccines. The figures disclosed in the letter have been shared with DAs at official-level by the Vaccine Taskforce (VTF) in BEIS. We do not think there are points for you to raise.

SOS for Scotland may wish to raise the issue of early vaccination for teachers, with a view to seeking cross-UK consensus on the issue. We recommend that this is a matter for the Northern Ireland Executive to decide.

### Lines to Take

- I am very pleased to see the successful vaccination of over 45,000 people in Northern Ireland, including care home residents and staff and HSC staff.
- I note that there has been some delay in the progress of vaccine administration against the Executive's 5-phase plan for rollout. [Initial projections were to have vaccinated over 100,000 people by now.] My Department will be testing at official-level today whether there is a need for further UKG support in this area.

### Background

#### *Vaccine rollout in NI*

NI has received 165,750 doses of the Pfizer and 50,400 doses of the AZ vaccine. Since the 8th December 46,000 vaccines have been administered in NI. This is significantly behind the Executive's initial projections for 100,000 vaccinations, including for all healthcare workers, within three weeks from the first vaccination (ie. by 29th Dec).

Pfizer vaccine rollout in NI: (As above) A total of 46,043. Almost 10,000 care home residents have been vaccinated, as well as over 10,000 care home staff and more than 25,000 health and social care staff. Vaccine teams have visited 439 of NI's 483 care homes, every home in NI that does not currently have a Covid-19 outbreak.

Oxford/AstraZeneca rollout in NI: Injections of the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine began in NI GP practices on Monday (04/01). Thirty practices will be administering 50,000 doses of the vaccine, with 11,000 people aged over 80 set to receive the vaccine this week. An additional 160,000 doses are expected to be delivered to NI by the end of January.

*Vaccine rollout in Scotland and publication of data*

Scottish Government has criticised UKG for a lack of information regarding vaccine supply from UKG as a reason for delayed deployment in Scotland. Officials have expressed concern that any such or similar criticism will deflect positive publicity of UKG's vaccine procurement and delivery, and may be escalated if SG comes under increased criticism for its deployment of the vaccine. Officials have noted similar precedent in relation to PPE and testing. In a call yesterday with CDL, FM Scotland stated her intention to publish vaccination figures daily and called for publication of data on vaccine delivery.

The SOS for Scotland is keen to regularly publish and promote data on how many vaccines have been provided to SG for deployment. This is not currently a concern for Northern Ireland. However, the regular publication of data will be useful should a similar narrative emerge around vaccine deployment in NI.

*Wider background*

Pfizer vaccine rollout UK: Immunisation experts at the World Health Organisation (WHO) have recommended that the second dose of the Pfizer vaccine should be administered 21-28 days after the first, but that an interval of up to six weeks is possible. The UK's medical authorities have come under pressure to justify the UK's policy of an interval of up to 12 weeks.

Vaccines rollout in England: There is concern that the UK Government will fall short of its target of 13m vaccinations by mid-Feb (currently 1.3m have been vaccinated).

## **ANNEX - LETTER TO NORTHERN IRELAND EXECUTIVE ON VACCINE DELIVERY**

Dear ,

I'd like to express my thanks to the Northern Irish Executive for your hard work and continuing co-operation following the successful initial deployment of a COVID-19 vaccine across the UK. This success has been the result of the continued engagement between the UK Government and devolved administrations to the benefit of all British citizens.

The UK Government is procuring COVID-19 vaccines for the whole of the UK and I am encouraged that Northern Ireland has already received 165,750 doses of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine and 50,400 doses of the Sceptre (Oxford, AstraZeneca) vaccine to date. For clarity in planning, I am writing to confirm the upcoming delivery schedule to Northern Ireland as per the agreed policy for allocation for COVID-19 vaccine doses (2.85% of doses procured once population proportionate shares have been deducted for the Crown Dependencies and Overseas Territories).

We can confirm forecasted delivery to Northern Ireland of a total 504,075 doses of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine and 753,926 doses of the Sceptre vaccine by the end of March 2021, with the full weekly breakdown displayed below.

I will write to you again as and when additional delivery schedules are available. We will also keep you informed in the event that additional COVID-19 vaccines become available for deployment across all four parts of the UK. I will also continue to monitor progress and immediately raise any issues that may arise with delivery schedules going forward so that we can flag them with you as soon as feasibly possible.

As I am sure you can understand, it is critical the information contained herein on delivery schedules is treated as strictly confidential and commercially sensitive.

I look forward to our continued collaboration in 2021 as we continue to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic together by deploying safe and effective vaccines as soon as possible in order to save lives and reduce the number of people who need hospital treatment due to COVID-19.

Yours sincerely,

### **Pfizer vaccine delivery schedule to Northern Ireland**

OFFICIAL SENSITIVE

Supply (Forecast)	Batches in Transit (Highest Confidence)	Promised (Pending Batch Release)	Projected (Offered by Supplier)	Forecast (Best VTF view) (Lowest Confidence)	Total
04/01/2021	-	-	-	-	-
11/01/2021	-	-	-	-	-
18/01/2021	-	-	44,850	-	44,850
25/01/2021	-	-	44,850	-	44,850
01/02/2021	-	-	28,275	-	28,275
08/02/2021	-	-	28,275	-	28,275
15/02/2021	-	-	28,275	-	28,275
22/02/2021	-	-	29,250	-	29,250
01/03/2021	-	-	44,850	-	44,850
08/03/2021	-	-	44,850	-	44,850
15/03/2021	-	-	44,850	-	44,850
22/03/2021	-	-	-	-	-
29/03/2021	-	-	-	-	-

**Sceptre delivery schedule to Northern Ireland**

Supply (Forecast)	Batches in Transit (Highest Confidence)	Promised (Pending Batch Release)	Projected (Offered by Supplier)	Forecast (Best VTF view) (Lowest Confidence)	Total
04/01/2021	-	-	-	-	-
11/01/2021	-	-	35,056	-	35,056
18/01/2021	-	-	69,130	-	69,130
25/01/2021	-	-	-	57,620	57,620
01/02/2021	-	-	-	35,392	35,392
08/02/2021	-	-	-	34,952	34,952
15/02/2021	-	-	-	40,712	40,712
22/02/2021	-	-	-	74,872	74,872
01/03/2021	-	-	-	81,424	81,424
08/03/2021	-	-	-	70,800	70,800
15/03/2021	-	-	-	81,424	81,424
22/03/2021	-	-	-	40,712	40,712
29/03/2021	-	-	-	81,432	81,432

**Overview of assumptions:**

- Forecasts set out an operational forecast of weekly dose volumes to the end of March. This is based on the latest information, using agreed Barnett formula allocations, but remains subject to change. All dates are also subject to batch release.
- Actual allocations will follow standard allocation rules and may therefore vary slightly from this projection (e.g. due to the need to maintain a working buffer stock).

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- Overseas Territories have not been included in the Pfizer calculations. An adjustment to the schedule equivalent to 0.4% of total doses will be made at a point in the future.
- Received to date figures indicate doses that have been received from the manufacturer and are available to order as of 31st December.
- Forecast doses are categorised as follows:
  - Batches in transit: Shipments in transit (confirmed by the supplier)
  - Batch release plan: Shipments with a specific projected release date (provided by the supplier)
  - Projected delivery: Shipments with an estimated release date (provided by the supplier)
  - Forecast delivery: Estimate forecast delivery profile (based on VTF and supplier best view)