

Ireland to vaccinate teens as Delta concerns linger

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Ireland will start offering COVID-19 vaccinations to children aged 12 and up, the government said Tuesday, warning the Delta variant still poses "a significant risk" in the country despite a high-tempo jabs

rollout.

In a statement following a cabinet meeting, the government said it "accepted advice" from Dublin's jabs taskforce that "recommends the extension of the vaccination programme to children aged 12-15".

"This will be reviewed from a planning, operational and clinical perspective in the coming days," the statement said.

Health minister Stephen Donnelly said children would be offered mRNA vaccines produced by Pfizer/BioNTech and Moderna which have been approved by the European Medicines Agency (EMA).

"We are continuing to see an increase in cases of COVID-19 among our [young people](#)," he said in a statement.

"Vaccination, along with continued adherence to the public health advice, remains the best protection we can offer."

Separately on Tuesday, Irish teenagers aged 16 and 17 were permitted to register to secure appointments for mRNA COVID vaccinations.

Those aged 18 plus have been eligible for vaccination since early July.

Ireland's [vaccine](#) rollout was initially sluggish and tethered to an EU programme that was hobbled by procurement issues.

But it has dramatically picked up pace in recent months.

Dublin said to date over 5.5 million doses of vaccine have been administered in the Republic, which is home to five million people.

Some 69% of Ireland's population are now fully vaccinated while 83%

have been partially inoculated, according to the government.

Since the pandemic began, there have been 5,026 COVID-19 deaths in Ireland.

Although the [death toll](#) has remained low, case figures have risen in recent weeks as Ireland dropped pandemic curbs.

The daily infection toll now regularly surpasses 1,000 and the Health Services Executive (HSE) has also warned that hospital admissions are on the rise.

The [government](#) warned "the incidence of the Delta variant in Ireland poses a significant risk, particularly to those who are not yet fully vaccinated".

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