

**Vaccination & B.1.617.2:
Where is Ireland going in the coming
weeks and months?
- Learning from England**



**Independent Scientific Advocacy Group (ISAG) Public Meeting
and Press Conference
12pm, Wednesday 2 June 2021**

Guest Speaker:

Prof. Christina Pagel (Director of the Clinical Operational Research Unit (CORU) and Professor of Operational Research at University College London, and member of Independent SAGE, UK).

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Over the past week, the Delta variant (B.1.617.2, first identified in India) has become the dominant strain of SARS-CoV2 detected in England. Data reported by Public Health England show that cases have risen 27% in the last week, while hospital admissions have risen 15%, despite a majority of the total population (almost 60%, compared to roughly 35% in Ireland) having received at least one vaccination dose. Prof Pagel will discuss the worsening Public Health situation in England. She will review emerging data that suggest that the Delta variant is substantially more transmissible than the Alpha variant (B.1.1.7), and will discuss why we should be concerned about relaxing restrictions while this variant is spreading, even in the context of a very successful vaccine roll-out.

Prof. Pagel and the ISAG panel will be available to answer questions about what the rapid and growing spread of the Delta variant in England means for Ireland and for our plans to relax restrictions on indoor hospitality and international travel.

The event will be chaired by Prof. Anthony Staines (Dublin City University) who will also give a brief situation report.

The Irish Government has chosen to allow the virus to travel to and to spread in Ireland, and to largely rely on vaccination alone as the strategy for recovery from COVID19. Our vaccine roll out has been good, and mandatory hotel quarantine, while it was fully in place, reduced the number of cases and variants imported.

Vaccination works very well, and does reduce both infection and transmission, but the level of protection rises from about 60% to 70% after the first dose, to about 85% to 90% after the second dose. Vaccines show reduced efficacy to the B.1.617.2 variant, especially after the first dose and this will reduce vaccine impact on the suppression of transmission in the population.

Managing our risk over the summer, we will need to bring back mandatory hotel quarantine, including quarantine for the United Kingdom. We also continue to advise the full activation of local and regional public health to reduce case numbers as fast as possible. We need to continue with our vaccination program, and roll it out as fast as possible.

To attend and listen or to ask questions, click here to register:

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_WoLk125hR_e3a1J2LOnGBA

This will primarily be a Questions and Answers session. We welcome advance questions from members of the press, politicians, special interest groups and the public sent to: isagcovid@gmail.com, or ask them live.

Further Information:

The Independent Scientific Advocacy Group (I.S.A.G.) is a multidisciplinary, all-island, group of scientists, academics, and researchers who have come together to advocate for an evidence-guided SARS-CoV-2 elimination strategy for the island of Ireland.