



COVID 19 Medicine and Public Health Committee Sub Group

Minutes

29th June 2021, 1pm

Zoom Link: <https://ucd-ie.zoom.us/j/63990929993>

In attendance: **Professor Cecily Kelleher**, College Principal, College of Health and Agricultural Sciences (Chair) (CK), **Professor Jason Last**, Dean of Students (Vice Chair) (JL) **Professor Patrick Wall**, Professor of Public Health, School of Public Health, Physiotherapy and Sports Science (PW), **Professor Patricia Fitzpatrick**, Full Professor of Epidemiology and Biomedical Statistics, School of Public Health, Physiotherapy and Sports Science (PF), **Dr. Eadaoin Lysaght**, Acting Director of Student Health Services (EL), **Professor Simon More**, Full Professor of Vet Epidemiology & Risk Analysis, School of Veterinary Medicine (SM),

Beth Kilkenny, CHAS College Office, secretarial support

Apologies Dr. Peter Coulahan, Director of SIRC (PC)

1. Minutes and Matters Arising

Minutes from the previous meeting on 15th June were approved.

Previous minutes will be available online shortly.

2. Campus Re-opening and Other Matters

CK noted the HSE/IEHG vaccination centre in O'Reilly Hall is working very well, and has been increasing capacity over the last fortnight. A request has been received to extend leasehold contract to end of September, which has been approved by President and UMT.

CK will follow up with IEHG regarding which cohorts have access to the UCD vaccination centre under National protocols, before then convening a meeting with EL, JL, PC, Lisa Cryan and Marita Kilroe, to discuss logistics regarding contingency groups.

- University response to National Framework (Level 1 - 5 restrictions)

No update

- Campus COVID+ cases – Update

1 case over last two weeks, no transmission.

- International Students Arrangements

It was noted that Douglas Proctor has now left his role as Director of UCD Global. Team Leads are managing work programmes in the interim including arrivals protocols.

EL noted large number of queries particularly regarding vaccinations from international students. They will be eligible as with other students when in Ireland. EL also noted large number of queries regarding 'travel certifications.' Queries should be directed to HSE FAQs.

- UCD Healthy Ireland campus initiative

No update.

- UniCov Study

CK and JL attended most recent steering meeting. Submission has now been made to ethics committee, with some minor changes advised. It was advised the project participants should also contact Estates helpline if diagnosed positive as per the usual UCD protocol.. JL noted slight changes to structure and participants than originally planned; it will now start asap and continue into Trimester 1, there will be around 2000 people recruited to include staff, Undergraduate and Graduate students.

SM noted possibility of extension of SVM pilot to be incorporated into this study. CK noted that Gerald Barry is also on the steering committee.

The steering committee will continue to meet fortnightly.

3. CTC Update

MOU with UCD expires 8th August.

4. Vet Med antigen testing pilot - manuscript feedback

SM sought feedback from the group on the report from the antigen pilot, which had been circulated to the group. PW noted issue around uptake, and would need to consider how to improve this for students, it would have to be explicitly addressed by any wider campus protocol. It was also noted that it was successful for staff primarily because of reassurance factor; there was an absence of positive cases in this cohort to date.

5. AOB

Meetings will be convened on an adhoc basis over the summer if required.



COVID 19 Medicine and Public Health Committee Sub Group

Minutes

27th July 2021, 1pm

Zoom Link: <https://ucd-ie.zoom.us/j/66799614510>

In attendance: **Professor Cecily Kelleher**, College Principal, College of Health and Agricultural Sciences (Chair) (CK), **Professor Jason Last**, Dean of Students (Vice Chair) (JL) Dr. Peter Coulahan, Director of SIRC (PC), **Professor Patricia Fitzpatrick**, Full Professor of Epidemiology and Biomedical Statistics, School of Public Health, Physiotherapy and Sports Science (PF), **Dr. Eadaoin Lysaght**, Acting Director of Student Health Services (EL), **Professor Simon More**, Full Professor of Vet Epidemiology & Risk Analysis, School of Veterinary Medicine (SM),

Beth Kilkenny, CHAS College Office, secretarial support

Apologies **Professor Patrick Wall**, Professor of Public Health, School of Public Health, Physiotherapy and Sports Science (PW),

6. Minutes and Matters Arising

Minutes from the previous meeting on 29th June were approved.

Minutes of previous meetings will be posted online at SIRC website.

7. Campus Re-opening and Other Matters

- University response to National Framework (Level 1 - 5 restrictions)
 - Continuing to follow national guidelines; plans are for campus to reopen in September.
 - Awaiting definitive position from HEA/HEI regarding largescale lectures classes but should plan for these being delivered online.
 - 50 or less no formal distancing required in current draft plans except in labs and similar.
 - Large group lectures can be recorded to facilitate students requiring to attend in person classes closely after. Exact details to be confirmed
 - Additional study spaces have been made available and buildings will be available for students to watch online offerings.
- Campus COVID+ cases
 - Two cases mid-July. Seven close contacts. Handled extremely well by relevant School, which reduced adverse impact.
 - JL noted two additional cases on campus.
- Rapid antigen testing communications
 - Rapid Antigen testing re-established twice a week in Vet School, with greater uptake. This will continue throughout August and then be re-assessed.

- JL updated group on progress of UniCov study after attendance at Steering Group Meeting. The study is progressing and moving towards data collection. Importance of maintaining links with the group was noted.
- Blackrock accommodation
 - The group has received a renewed query on opening up student accommodation in Blackrock. After discussion of the potential issues arising from shared bathroom and kitchen facilities it was agreed advice on this facility stands. . If Estates do plan to utilise it, could be opened with partial occupancy with ratios on shared facilities similar to other residences.
- International Students Arrangements
 - UCD Global are communicating with students currently re National self-isolation and quarantining requirements. Sectoral guidance not available at the moment.
 - All international students should still be advised to come to Ireland following PH guidelines relevant to their departing country.
 - International students continue to be eligible for vaccination under national programme upon arrival and registration in Ireland.
 - There was discussion around a potential protocol for opening UCD vaccination centre to students as they are now eligible under national programme. This could operate with a list provided to the centre, or as a walk-in. A protocol to be developed by JL, Caroline Mangan, and nominees from EL and PC (Patricia Brady and Marita Kilroe.)

8. CTC Update

- It was noted that the Contact Tracing Centre was closing in UCD on 8th August.
- PC and Anne Scrivener will review UCD algorithm for managing cases; following which PC and PW will follow up with relevant HSE Public Health Medicine contact, possibly Director of Public Health Dr Deirdre Mulholland.
- JL noted HSE algorithm has changed which might impact going forward ; fully vaccinated are not tested nor have to restrict movements.

9. AOB

- Meetings to be re-established on a fortnightly basis for the month of August.



COVID 19 Medicine and Public Health Committee Sub Group Minutes

10th August 2021, 1pm

Zoom Link: <https://ucd-ie.zoom.us/j/66799614510>

In attendance: **Professor Cecily Kelleher**, College Principal, College of Health and Agricultural Sciences (Chair) (CK), **Professor Jason Last**, Dean of Students (Vice Chair) (JL) **Dr. Peter Coulahan**, Director of SIRC (PC), **Professor Patricia Fitzpatrick**, Full Professor of Epidemiology and Biomedical Statistics, School of Public Health, Physiotherapy and Sports Science (PF), **Dr. Eadaoin Lysaght**, Acting Director of Student Health Services (EL), **Professor Patrick Wall**, Professor of Public Health, School of Public Health, Physiotherapy and Sports Science (PW),

Beth Kilkenny, CHAS College Office, secretarial support

Apologies: **Professor Simon More**, Full Professor of Vet Epidemiology & Risk Analysis, School of Veterinary Medicine (SM)

10. Minutes and Matters Arising

Minutes from the previous meeting on 27th July were approved.

The UCD CTC has now closed and a closing assembly is taking place tomorrow. CK noted thanks and congratulations for all work that was done in the centre. There was discussion around issues which might arise around the loss of UCD CTC. PW and PC will follow up with HSE CHO6 with regards enabling contact tracing for UCD cases into the future.

11. Campus Re-opening and Other Matters

- Request from President regarding re-opening

CK outlined background of request. The university is awaiting sectoral guidelines. In the meantime, the Registrar has prepared draft documentation and Schools and Colleges have been asked to provide plans of teaching delivery under three potential situations which allow for online and in person delivery. UMT has been asked to consider again before communications with Schools are issued.

The President has asked this group to consider three specific mitigation points with relation to re-opening campus, all subject to prevailing public health guidelines.

1. Reduce class times to 45 minutes – this was agreed.
2. Mandatory mask wearing except lecturer whilst speaking – this was agreed.

3. CO2 monitoring, do estates have capacity to do this ? – PC noted there are a number of monitors ordered and shared a draft algorithm which would determine which rooms would best benefit from installation. Work is ongoing on this and should have an idea on numbers in next couple of weeks. It was noted that a prolonged ‘red light’ would indicate an issue as opposed to working like a fire alarm where sounding would require evacuation. It was agreed CK will report algorithm in place re CO2 monitoring.

The matter of opening up large lecture theatres was discussed. It was noted that for planning purposes for the coming academic year rooms are allocated as per normal capacity without social distancing (with the exception of e.g. laboratory practicals). It was agreed that there could be major challenges associated with the unrestricted opening up of larger lecture theatres which include contact tracing in the instance of a positive case, as well as large numbers circulating in buildings between classes.

<https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/covid19/contact-tracing/>

There is no safe or arbitrary threshold as such to recommend from a public health point of view as it is dependent on a number of contingent factors. It was noted ventilation might be helpful in determining capacity (see above). The largest number indoors on current national guidelines is 100 for e.g. weddings but that might change under the National re-opening plans if vaccination rates of 85-90% were achieved in adult population and the levels of community infection fell with a reproduction or r number of 1 or less.

- Vaccination rollout update

In answer to a query regarding proof of vaccination policy it was noted that it is not permissible to ask for proof of vaccination and retain record in the workplace. This is based on advice from DPO. PC suggested this should be communicated to faculty and module co-ordinators, course administrators.

However, in certain settings, such proof is required. The HSE requires HEIs to provide such information for student placements in its healthcare facilities for the coming academic year.

It was noted there was a walk-in vaccination centre at UCD on Sunday 8th August. JL is meeting with Hugh Kane during week, will provide update to CK in advance of UMT.

- Campus COVID+ cases

2 more cases last week. 1 staff 1 PhD student.
JL will provide latest data to CK in advance of UMT.

- International Students Arrangements

Any international student is eligible for vaccination under the national programme. A PPS number is not required, only ID.

No definitive guidance has been received regarding SINOVAC. Awaiting advice from NIAC.

- UCD Healthy Ireland campus initiative

N/A

- Unicov Study – CK provided updated based on minutes received. 4 Research Assistants have been hired and pilot is beginning this week.

The President also has query regarding rapid testing. CK will report SVM has reinstated its rapid testing protocol. PC noted anyone engaging in field work is being encouraged to take regular tests and SIRC is facilitating these supports.

12. Student Health Declaration

Document had been pre-circulated for review. It was proposed to add lines regarding gathering data for contact tracing purposes, and being agreeable to vaccination if required by programme e.g. for placement purposes. JL will make changes and circulate updated version.

13. Request re self-isolating and quarantining in Residences

Positive cases in shared apartments will isolate in bedrooms with support and guidance with regards accessing shared spaces e.g. bathrooms, kitchens. Others who live with them would likely also have to isolate as close contacts if not fully vaccinated.

Blackrock residences – The group was asked to review the decision not to reopen Blackrock residence in the context of a full reopening of campus and 100% attendance at lectures. The group agreed with its previous position pending that wider decision.

Reopening the library – PC has received query from library proposing relaxing current limits to allow for more casual browsing and 'drop in' seating. Request to decrease distance between seats and whether they should be facing in one direction. PC to email proposal from library to the group for comment.

14. AOB

N/A



COVID 19 Medicine and Public Health Committee Sub Group Minutes

24th August 2021, 1.15pm

Zoom Link: <https://ucd-ie.zoom.us/j/66799614510>

In attendance: **Professor Cecily Kelleher**, College Principal, College of Health and Agricultural Sciences (Chair) (CK), **Dr. Peter Coulahan**, Director of SIRC (PC), **Professor Patricia Fitzpatrick**, Full Professor of Epidemiology and Biomedical Statistics, School of Public Health, Physiotherapy and Sports Science (PF), **Dr. Eadaoin Lysaght**, Acting Director of Student Health Services (EL), **Professor Patrick Wall**, Professor of Public Health, School of Public Health, Physiotherapy and Sports Science (PW), **Professor Simon More**, Full Professor of Vet Epidemiology & Risk Analysis, School of Veterinary Medicine (SM)

Beth Kilkenny, CHAS College Office, secretarial support

Apologies: **Professor Jason Last**, Dean of Students (Vice Chair) (JL)

15. Minutes and Matters Arising

Minutes from the previous meeting on 10th August were approved.

16. Campus Re-opening and Other Matters

- CK updated on comprehensive discussions which took place at UMT in light of President's recent communication regarding reopening of campus, noting that the challenges discussed at this group had been relayed and considered. The decision made at UMT was to open up with relevant safety measures including mask wearing, ventilation and crowd control, on the basis of prevailing public health advice, to be set out in the President's bulletin and detailed in updated FAQs. As a contingency, lecturers will be asked to provide online materials. Higher Education leaders are meeting with Minister today to discuss sector wide planning.

SM noted modelling suggests current surge will peak in 2 or 3 weeks which will coincide with university reopening. Circa 53% of 16-29 year olds are currently fully vaccinated. Next 2 or 3 months will be challenging. All sectoral guidelines as set out by NEPHET and HEA will be followed. Following discussion, it was noted that target vaccination rates for over 18s, including third level students, are over 90% by term commencement.

- Vaccination rollout update

CK noted a large number attended walk in clinic on Sunday at O'Reilly Hall.

Vaccination Certificates will be required for eating/drinking indoors on campus in line with national catering guidelines.

- Campus COVID+ cases

There was discussion around the effective contact tracing of a recent case.

- International Students Arrangements

EL noted queries are being received regarding already fully vaccinated students requesting another vaccine on arrival in Ireland. It was confirmed that the National Immunisation Office considers those with WHO approved vaccines as fully vaccinated so such students presenting to vaccination centres will not receive another vaccine. If students have had one shot/incomplete vaccination they will be eligible to complete their vaccination schedule. No PPS number is required at vaccination centres. The requirement to self-isolate or enter quarantine on arrival in Ireland is dealt with separately, depends on country of origin and is as per prevailing Public Health guidelines.

- EL noted queries received from Student Advisers regarding mitigations in place for vulnerable students. These queries will be managed on a case by case basis and should be directed in first instance by the student to Student Advisers and Module Coordinators, who can be directed to Dean of Students as required.

- UCD Healthy Ireland campus initiative

N/A

- Unicov Study – Protocol is ready and due to receive ethical approval imminently. Intention is to recruit 2000 plus participants in UCD. PC confirmed SIRC guidelines re rapid testing in other discrete groups including those undertaking fieldwork trips and performance scholars.

PW and PC are meeting with HSE tomorrow regarding contact tracing for UCD students and will update CK by email subsequently.

- Blackrock Residence – The group understands the residence is required in light of high demand. The decision to open rests with Estates and would be done with maximum public health precautions in place including the possibility of using pods for accessing shared spaces.
- Library - Currently the library is operating a booking system with two metres distancing, and limited walk in spaces. This group is being asked to advise on reducing distancing to one metre or none at all, as well as considering time limits on attendance and the direction of desks.

The group considered that evidence of vaccination for access to library seating had merit but that is not currently possible under workplace guidelines. The group advocates that distancing provisions should remain, especially for the first trimester and recommends to continue with using a booking system for most occupancy. Mask wearing and ventilation will be in place as elsewhere in the university. PC will liaise with the library.

17. AOB

N/A



COVID 19 Medicine and Public Health Committee Sub Group Minutes

7th September 2021, 1.00pm

Zoom Link: <https://ucd-ie.zoom.us/j/66799614510>

In attendance: **Professor Cecily Kelleher**, College Principal, College of Health and Agricultural Sciences (Chair) (CK), **Professor Jason Last**, Dean of Students (Vice Chair) (JL) **Dr. Peter Coulahan**, Director of SIRC (PC), **Professor Patricia Fitzpatrick**, Full Professor of Epidemiology and Biomedical Statistics, School of Public Health, Physiotherapy and Sports Science (PF), **Dr. Eadaoin Lysaght**, Acting Director of Student Health Services (EL),
Beth Kilkenny, CHAS College Office, secretarial support

Apologies: **Professor Patrick Wall**, Professor of Public Health, School of Public Health, Physiotherapy and Sports Science (PW), **Professor Simon More**, Full Professor of Vet Epidemiology & Risk Analysis, School of Veterinary Medicine (SM)

18. Minutes and Matters Arising

Minutes from the previous meeting on 24th August were approved.

19. Campus Re-opening and Other Matters

CK noted PC had updated FAQs for staff which are now very clear. It was noted guidelines for medically vulnerable lecturers are available in the FAQs and there is a process in place for management of this and communication to HoS. Lectures in this case could be delivered online or by an alternate.

It was confirmed that mask wearing is mandatory in line with other indoor spaces. Those who have medical exemption from mask wearing could be held in a central registry. It was noted that DCU have a process for this and UCD could adopt similar strategy.

In response to a query from EL it was noted that Student Health Service as part of its routine annual programme would record COVID-19 vaccination status for Health Sciences students as it is required for all placement purposes. Students are made aware information will be relayed to Schools and are asked for consent. It is recorded whether the vaccine is EMA or WHO approved and the type of vaccine if required.

Some smaller meeting rooms are planned for small group teaching which may not been assessed by Estates as they are not formally allocated as teaching spaces. They will also need to be assessed. ACTION: It was suggested HoS could send list of relevant rooms to Estates.

PC and PW met with CHO 6 and team. The Department of Health and CSO6 will keep UCD record regarding outbreaks and will support link with UCD internal system as previously. However,

awaiting clarification from HSE WGS if genome sequencing would be supported by HSE as part of index case or outbreak investigation

CK met with Gerald Barry and Michael Doherty of SVM regarding reopening; questions were addressed by FAQs. Vet Med will continue with rapid testing protocol for veterinary hospital and would welcome being part of the HSE proposal.

It was agreed that it would be helpful to clarify a position on activities which are not essential to curriculum and do not fall under banner of sports or performance. ACTION: JL to raise with Registrar.

- Vaccination rollout update

Vaccination rate of student age group is likely to be around 85-90% consistent with vaccination rate in target age group. JL continues to liaise with Hugh Kane at HSE O'Reilly Hall vaccination centre. ACTION: Discussions are ongoing regarding another walk-in clinic targeted at students. The importance of clear messaging was noted.

- Campus COVID+ cases

6 cases in residences, all fully vaccinated. 2 international students. 4 RAs.

- International Students Arrangements: No update

- UCD Healthy Ireland campus initiative: No update.

20. Rapid Antigen Testing – Prof Paddy Mallon (UCD, SVUH) and (HSE)

Prof Paddy Mallon and HSE joined the meeting at 1330 to discuss proposal to roll out Rapid Antigen Diagnostic Testing in the university community. A document outlining the proposal which requires self-test at home with HSE kits distributed by university had been pre-circulate to this group and also to the University Management Team. UMT discussed this morning and were in principle supportive albeit with some queries regarding logistics.

PM provided an overview of the proposal as outlined in the document, noting the request to implement across the university.

NO'B – noted pilots have been running across other sectors since August. Proposal for university is that testing would be done on a programmatic basis e.g. twice weekly within certain cohorts. Government will cover costs of kits and there is no issue with supply. Students would self-test and record results via app. A positive refers person for a PCR test.

Logistical considerations: management of storage and distribution, recording of number of tests distributed, which cohorts would be most suitable, clear messaging and alignment with public health guidelines regarding close contacts etc.

ACTION: UCD to consider logistics and CK revert to Paddy Mallon and HSE.

21. AOB

N/A



COVID 19 Medicine and Public Health Committee Sub Group Minutes

21st September 2021, 1.00pm

Zoom Link: <https://ucd-ie.zoom.us/j/66799614510>

In attendance: Professor Cecily Kelleher, College Principal, College of Health and Agricultural Sciences (Chair) (CK), Dr. Peter Coulahan, Director of SIRC (PC), Professor Patricia Fitzpatrick, Full Professor of Epidemiology and Biomedical Statistics, School of Public Health, Physiotherapy and Sports Science (PF), Dr. Eadaoin Lysaght, Acting Director of Student Health Services (EL), Professor Patrick Wall, Professor of Public Health, School of Public Health, Physiotherapy and Sports Science (PW), Professor Simon More, Full Professor of Vet Epidemiology & Risk Analysis, School of Veterinary Medicine (SM)

Beth Kilkenny, CHAS College Office, secretarial support

Apologies: Professor Jason Last, Dean of Students (Vice Chair) (JL)

22. Minutes and Matters Arising

Minutes from the previous meeting on 7th September were approved.

23. Campus Re-opening and Other Matters

- Vaccination rollout update

Pop-up vaccination centre is planned for the ground floor of the Restaurant building when O'Reilly Hall centre closes at the end of September. Current plans are that this centre will be open until March. It will initially offer boosters for healthcare workers.

A number of dates have been set out next week for drop-in clinics for students in O'Reilly Hall. EL noted it would be helpful to have these dates to promote on social media.

ACTION: BK to contact JL re details for information of other committee members.

- Campus COVID+ cases

Monday 13th September was beginning of new term and there have been 14 positive cases recorded since then, 13 in the student body.

In the instance of a positive case, all students in a module will be notified and are advised to be vigilant for symptoms. If seat numbers are available this can also be added to the communication.

It was noted that messaging needs to be reinforced around when people should not come on to campus. If a person is unwell, s/he should not go to class even if fully vaccinated. Also need to reinforce what action to take if in contact with a positive case.

ACTION: PC has messaging on this and will circulate to the group. EL will update on social media.

SM noted some uncertainty has been raised regarding clinical scenarios as to how people with symptoms should be managed. These are subject to GP assessment and sign-off. The wording of the health declaration has been recently revised also.

- International Students Arrangements

N/A

- UCD Healthy Ireland campus initiative

N/A

- HSE Rapid Testing Proposal

UCD will take part in the HSE sponsored home Rapid Antigen Diagnostic Testing programme as introduced at the previous meeting. It is expected to focus on large faculty areas and residences, including the Vet School. It is anticipated this would proceed over a 12-week pilot period. UMT have approved in principle and logistics of distribution are now being explored. This might include administrative support for SIRC. It was noted the clarity over action required if a positive result is received is critical.

ACTION: Gerald Barry will act as a liaison between HSE and UCD

It was noted that this is a separate initiative to the UniCov research programme led by Prof Mallon.

24. Attendance of Dr Orla Hegarty

Dr Orla Hegarty, Assistant Professor in UCD School of Architecture, Planning and Environmental Policy, joined the meeting at 13.30 and a round of introductions was made.

Dr Hegarty outlined a number of areas for consideration as part of the Estates management of buildings as being beneficial to the university's environmental strategy in mitigating against the spread of COVID-19. The group acknowledged these important considerations and thanked Dr Hegarty for attending the meeting.

25. AOB

N/A