

Ireland: ‘Draconian’ Restrictions Around COVID-19 Condemned by Health Service Executive Doctor

Clinical director critical of media and public ‘obsession’ with daily case numbers

By [Paul Cullen](#)

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Covid-19 is “much less severe” than the average annual flu and current “draconian” restrictions are no longer justified, according to a senior [Health Service Executive](#) doctor.

People at low risk from the virus should be exposed to it so they can develop herd immunity and reduce the risk to vulnerable groups, according to Dr Martin Feeley, clinical director of the Dublin Midlands [Hospital](#) Group.

“That is what is happening and yet the policy seems to be to prevent it,” he says. “This should have been allowed to happen during the summer months before the annual flu season, to reduce the workload on the health service during winter months.”

Any assessment of Ireland’s strategy to combat the virus should take into account the cost to people’s quality of life, according to the former vascular surgeon, who points out that “you can’t postpone youth”.

“The financial cost can be seen in any walk or drive through cities, towns and villages. Mortgage repayments and other financial setbacks are virtually all suffered by the young worker or business person and not by the over-65, who are guaranteed their pension, as indeed are the salaries of the individuals who decide to inflict these draconian measures,” the 70 year old told The Irish Times.

Dr Feeley is critical of the media and public “obsession” with daily case numbers, when so few people are being admitted to hospital or intensive care units. “The number of deaths among recent cases is less than one in a thousand. This data reflects a disease much less severe than the average annual flu.

‘Borders on hysteria’

“The media reaction to these cases, ie, with the gravity appropriate to reporting deaths from a major catastrophe, borders on hysteria. Opening a newscast with the number of people testing positive for a condition less dangerous than the flu, which many don’t even know they have, is scaremongering.”

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Our thanks to The Irish Times for bringing this article to our attention.

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Most people are already immune to the virus, due to cross-immunity from prior coronaviruses, while the wearing of masks is an ineffective “politically driven endeavour”, they say.

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Featured image: Dr Martin Feeley says any assessment of Ireland’s strategy should take into account the cost to people’s quality of life. Photograph: Nick Bradshaw

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