

Broadcaster Pat Kenny and his Newstalk production team were threatened by Covid-19 anti-vaccine campaigners that they would be executed or jailed for life in Nuremberg-style trials, he has said.

Mr Kenny, whose home in Dalkey, was picketed by those opposed to the Covid-19 vaccine, said there was a "rump" of "very vocal people who are just riddled with misinformation".

Protests have been held outside the homes of public figures such as Tánaiste Leo Varadkar, Minister for Health Stephen Donnelly, chief medical officer Dr Tony Holohan and broadcaster, Joe Duffy by anti-vaccination groups.

Prof Luke O'Neill told the Good Summit conference on Wednesday that he and five other immunologists he knew had received literature with an image of a noose and a suggestion that they would be hanged for war crimes.

READ MORE

"There is an orchestrated campaign going on. They are attacking scientists, they are attacking the media and we are all in this boat together," Prof O'Neill said.

"My line is that we all stand together against this. It is a malign influence. I have sympathy for vaccine-hesitant people like pregnant women, but you can't argue with the other ones," he added.

He said the need for Covid-19 vaccine passes to get into nightclubs was the "straw that broke the camel's back" for holdouts among younger people, pointing to the 500 students who sought jabs at a Trinity College Dublin clinic this week.

Infection myths

It was a myth to suggest that vaccinated people were as likely to pass on the virus as unvaccinated people, Prof O'Neill added. Vaccinated people are 63 per cent less likely to spread the virus than those who are unvaccinated.

“It turns out that when I am vaccinated I will get rid of it more quickly, and a day later I will have less virus in my nose ... and I’m spreading it less,” he said.

“Why this keeps coming up is a mystery to me. That 63 per cent difference has a big effect, and in the population it has a massive effect, and remember less people are getting infected anyway if they are vaccinated. There is an 80 per cent decrease in risk of infection if you are vaccinated. Vaccination stops transmission. Anybody who denies that, show me your science.”

Sections

THE IRISH TIMES

17^c

Subscribe

Sign In

Health Organisation (WHO) estimated that six out of seven cases in Africa were going undetected. As a consequence there may be 56 million people currently in the world who have Covid-19 but are not aware of it. This constitutes an ideal ground for new variants to emerge, she warned.

The world’s poorest countries have received just 0.7 per cent of all vaccines so far, repeating the mistakes that were made during the height of the HIV/Aids crisis, she said.

She expressed disappointment that Ireland was not using its soft power to influence bigger countries but acknowledged that it was "incredibly difficult for politicians to forgo booster injections and send them overseas".

Prof Orla Hegarty said deaths from Covid-19 were very preventable. Half of all deaths from Covid-19 in the State occurred in just 400 settings, she added, mostly nursing homes.



Ronan McGreevy

Ronan McGreevy is a news reporter with The Irish Times



Trinity College Dublin

World Health Organisation

Ann Nolan

Joe Duffy

Leo Varadkar

Luke O Neill

Orla Hegarty

Pat Kenny

Ronan McGreevy

Stephen Donnelly

Tony Holohan