

# COVID-19

## Vaccination Programme

Communications priorities

4 – 11 October 2021

This report is for communicators promoting the uptake of the Covid-19 vaccination programme. We hope it will help guide you as you shape communication to best suit your audience.



- Thank you for making the first Vooma Vaccination Weekend a success!
- This was the largest mass mobilisation in support of the Covid-19 vaccination programme.
- Over **350,000** people were vaccinated. While we did not achieve our ambition of 500,000 vaccinations, the number of people vaccinated was twice as high as the average number recorded over the prior three weekends.
- This shows that we can get many more people to come forward for vaccination through sustained communications and social mobilisation – even as we look for other ways as well to encourage people to come forward.

## HEADLINES FOR THIS WEEK

### Key Messages -

### Sustain the impetus of the Vooma Vaccination Weekend

- Be part of the Vooma Vaccination drive!
- Don't wait, come straight to a vaccination site near you.
- You don't have to wait for an SMS.
- You can register when you arrive.

**Any questions or concerns, call 0800 029 999.**



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# HEADLINES FOR THIS WEEK - cont

## Key Messages -

### Address the concerns emerging on social media and from communities

#### *The vaccine is safe*

- There have been no deaths in South Africa as a result of Covid-19 vaccination.
- A few people have come for vaccination without realising they already have Covid-19, and have subsequently died – but they died from Covid infection and not from the vaccination.
- A few other people have died coincidentally following vaccination, as there are many other reasons why people die.
- When you vaccinate millions of people, it is inevitable that deaths will occur – not from the vaccine but from the many other reasons why people normally die.

#### *The vaccine is your choice*

- The President has made it clear that no one will be forced by government to get vaccinated.
- Some private companies may make it mandatory for their staff to get vaccinated, and private facilities and sports stadiums may choose only to admit people who have been vaccinated. That is their right, but it is not the position of government.
- We want people to get vaccinated because they want to, and because they are able to.

## Reinforce the previous key messages -

### Highlight the National Contact Centre

- If you are 18 and above, don't wait any longer! Go and get vaccinated at a site near you. You don't even have to wait for an SMS telling you when and where to go.
- Got any questions or concerns? Call the tollfree Covid-19 hotline 0800 029 999. It is there for you.

**Any questions or concerns, call 0800 029 999.**



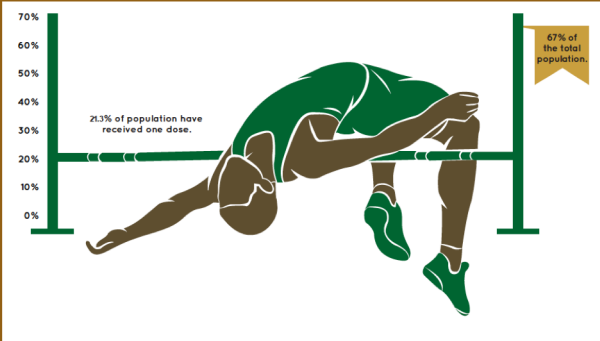
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# Progress with Vaccination Rollout

Nearly one third of all adults have not received at least one dose of the vaccination (either J&J or 1st dose of Pfizer). Over one-fifth are now fully vaccinated



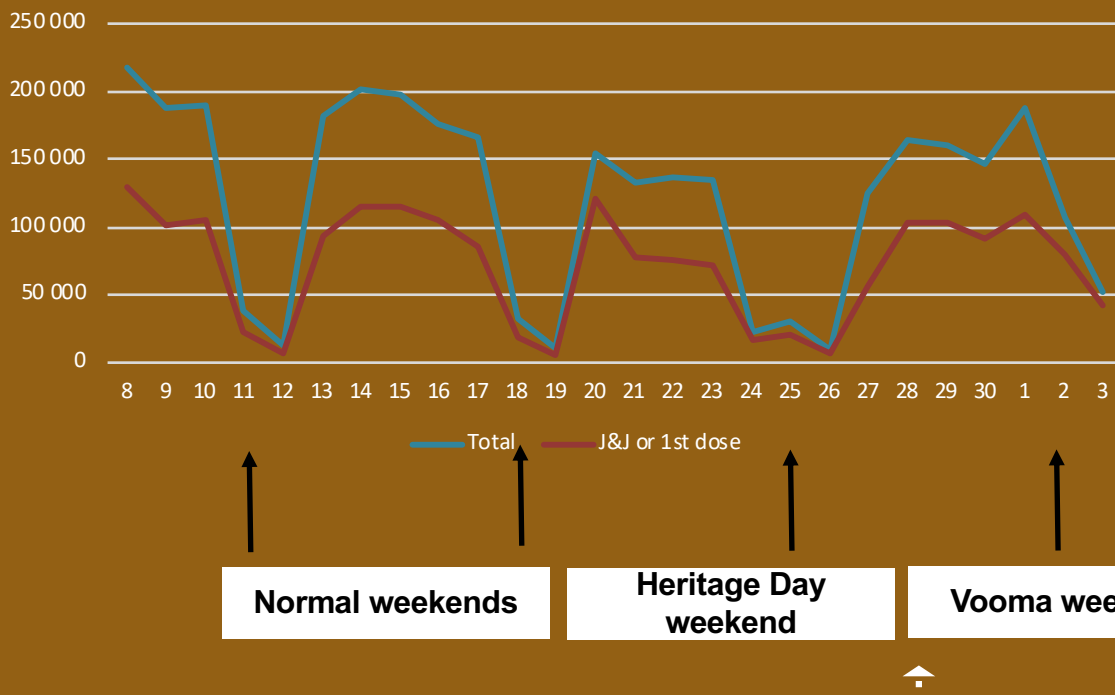
## Progress by 4 October 2021

	At least one dose	%	Fully vaccinated	%
% Total pop.	12,840,302	21.3%	9,074,609	15.0%
% Adult pop.	12,840,302	32.2%	9,074,609	22.8%



Encouragingly, the collective efforts over the past week have reversed the downwards trajectory in vaccinations, with 942,374 vaccinations recorded from Monday to Sunday (27.09 – 03.10) compared to 620,043 in the previous week (20-26.09).

Total and (1st Pfizer + J&J) 08 Sep - 03 Oct 2021



# Social Listening



Two important themes emerged from the social listening which need an urgent response.

## Vaccinating in the Middle of a Pandemic

Inevitably, there are a number of first-hand accounts of family members having died soon after vaccination. This is the challenge of vaccinating in the middle of a pandemic. It is not like vaccination against childhood diseases or the human papilloma virus which causes cervical cancer, where the incidence of infections is low or not immediately life-threatening. Here and now, we are vaccinating people who may have contracted Covid-19 already, and without knowing it, come forward for vaccination. This is why there have been some cases of Covid-19 related deaths soon after vaccination (13 cases until the end of August 2021). These deaths have been due to the disease of Covid-19, and not vaccinations. Another 34 cases were found to be coincidental, due to other causes of death.

## Mandatory Vaccination

Internationally there has been an increase in protests opposing vaccine mandates with the restrictions on job opportunities, access to and entry to facilities and restrictions on movement viewed violations of human rights. Whilst making vaccines mandatory is not the position of the government, other private institutions have the right to do so and it is possible that we will see many more of them announcing mandatory measures. Forced vaccination” is the focus of much political opposition and anti-vaxxers, though no one is proposing this and the choice to vaccinate is still the choice of individuals.

## Congratulations to our Top Performing Provinces

President Cyril Ramaphosa handed certificates to the three top performing Provinces, which were ranked according to the following criteria, namely:

Coverage (% of population 18+ who have received at least one dose)

- Risk reduction (% of population 50+ who have received at least one dose, and male: female ratio)
- Equity (Ratio of uninsured: insured)\*

### The top-ranked Provinces were:

1. Eastern Cape
2. Limpopo
3. Western Cape

In addition, over 2,000 health workers and health service managers will receive a certificate signed by the President, Mr Cyril Ramaphosa, in appreciation of their work on the vaccination programmes. These awards are based on nominations from provinces and Districts, and we hope to be able to show similar recognition for the next Vooma Weekend event.

\* The cutoff date of 15 September 2021 was used

# Vooma Vaccination Weekend

## 1-3 October 2021



### *The figures*

- Our target for the weekend was 500,000 people vaccinated. We achieved 71% of target, with late submissions still trickling in.
- As of 4 Oct 2021, records for a total of 353,819 people were vaccinated from Friday to Sunday.
- That is 1½ times more (1.55x) than the average of the two weekends prior to the Heritage Day weekend (where vaccinations were very low).
- Two out of three were first doses (66%), compared to an average of 62% first doses in the prior 21 days.
- The number of sites open on the Saturday was about 1,400 (approx. 50% of all sites), and 550 on Sunday. The increase in demand for vaccinations in those sites that were open (as opposed to ) is still to be determined.

### *Comment*

- We knew that the target of 500,000 was ambitious, but decided to commit to that number because that is the minimum required to reach 70% of the adult population by the end of the year. We simply cannot be less ambitious, because that would mean that we accept deaths in the 4th wave that we know can be prevented.
- It is encouraging to note that, in the week leading up to the Vooma Vaccination Weekend, the downward trend in daily vaccinations was reversed, and we experienced an upward trend.

## COMMUNICATIONS HIERARCHY FOR 4 – 11 OCTOBER

<b>WHAT</b>	<p>Be part of the Vooma Vaccination drive! If you are 18 years or older, don't wait, come straight to a vaccination site near you.</p> <p>Got any questions or concern? Call the tollfree Covid-19 hotline 0800 029 999. It is there for you.</p> <p>The vaccination is <b>free</b> to everyone in South Africa. You can go to a government health facility or a private pharmacy (like Clicks or Dis-Chem) or other private healthy facility, that offers vaccinations, even if you don't have medical aid.</p> <p>After your vaccination, you may feel a bit sick for a couple of days, as if you have the flu. That is a normal part of your body's response as it starts to protect you from getting seriously ill from Covid-19 in future.</p>	
<b>WHY</b>	<p>The vaccine is safe and protects you from getting very sick or dying from Covid-19.</p> <p>If you're over fifty, it's most important that you go now because you have the highest risk.</p> <p>There have been no deaths in South Africa as a result of Covid-19 vaccination. A few people have come for vaccination without realising they already have Covid-19, and have died soon afterwards – but they died from Covid infection and not from the vaccination.</p>	
<b>WHO</b>	<p>Any person in South Africa aged 18 and above should go get vaccinated right away.</p> <p>It is also safe for pregnant women to get vaccinated at any stage of pregnancy.</p> <p>It's your choice. Government is not forcing anybody to get vaccinated, but would like everyone to understand its benefits to them, their families and communities.</p>	<p>It's for men and women, SA citizens and people living in SA from other countries. At present, the system doesn't allow foreign nationals and people without ID's or other identity documentation to register. But we're working on it. By mid-October, we hope to be extend vaccination to everyone without documentation.</p>
<b>WHERE</b>	<p>You can visit any vaccination site at a government health facility or a private pharmacy. Even if you don't have medical aid, you can go to a private pharmacy and you won't have to pay.</p>	<p>Not all health facilities or pharmacies are vaccination sites.</p> <p>You can find out where your closest site is by visiting <a href="https://sacoronavirus.co.za/active-vaccination-sites/">https://sacoronavirus.co.za/active-vaccination-sites/</a> or calling the National COVID-19 hotline on 0800 029 999. The call is free.</p>
<b>HOW</b>	<p><b>IT WILL SAVE YOU TIME IF YOU REGISTER FIRST</b></p> <p>It will save you time if you register before you go, so that your details are already in the system.</p> <p>Phone <b>0800 029 999</b> tollfree OR</p> <p><b>USSD:</b> Dial *134*832*IDnumber#</p> <p><b>No ID no?</b> Just dial *134*832#</p> <p><b>WhatsApp:</b> Send "Register" to <b>0600 123 456</b></p> <p><b>Online:</b> <a href="http://www.vaccine.enroll.health.gov.za">www.vaccine.enroll.health.gov.za</a></p> <p>But you can still just walk in. You may just have to wait a bit longer.</p> <p><u>If you have access to the Internet, you can now choose when and where to get vaccinated.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Once you are registered, you can choose when and where to get vaccinated or change your vaccination appointment.</li> <li>Go to <a href="https://vaccine.booking.health.gov.za">https://vaccine.booking.health.gov.za</a></li> </ul>	<p>If you register, you will get an SMS telling you where and when to go to get vaccinated. But you don't have to wait for the SMS. Just go to your nearest vaccination site.</p> <p>Getting vaccinated is easy.</p> <p>When you get to the vaccination site, a nurse will take your temperature to check that you don't have Covid-19. If you do, you'll be asked to come back in a month when it's safer for you and for all the other people in the queue. If your temperature is normal, you'll be invited to join the queue to be vaccinated. When you do, you'll feel just a small prick in your arm. Afterwards you'll be asked to stay for 15 minutes just to make sure you have no side effects.</p>
<b>WHAT IF</b>	<p>It is normal to have some side effects</p> <p>A few hours after the vaccine you might feel like you've got a bad 'flu, with fevers and headaches and chills. But it goes away after day or so.</p>	<p>If you're worried or feel short of breath or your heart is racing, feel free to call the Covid-19 hotline 0800 029 999 for advice.</p>

**If you have any questions, call the COVID-19 hotline on 0800 029 999.**

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