

Circular 2/2021 EH

03 February 2021

Dear Resident,

COVID-19 VACCINATION PROGRAM ROLL-OUT

According to Prof Glenda Gray, CEO of the South African Medical Research Council (SAMRC), we need to start controlling the Coronavirus, and without a vaccine, we will be unable to. For now, the vaccine is the only way to slowly eradicate the disease, keep hospital admissions to a minimum and save lives.

The vaccine has proved to be effective, with some of the vaccines having favourable efficacy rates. Vaccinations have shown globally over time to improve immunity. There are no known major side effects, with some reports of a runny nose and tenderness at the injection site. The vaccine will reduce symptoms if one becomes infected and has proved to reduce Covid19 death rates.

After receiving the vaccine, an antibody test will detect antibodies within about 14 days (IgG and IgM). This antibody test can also be done to tell you if you have been exposed to the virus previously. The Covid-19 antibody test is readily available at Evergreen Health Clinics and you will receive your result within 10 minutes.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS IS NOT THE PCR TEST AND WILL NOT INDICATE YOUR CURRENT COVID-19 STATUS. If you have had Covid19 before, it is still advisable to go for the vaccine, because antibodies start to decay after five months and there is the possibility of the virus mutating into new variants.

Government has sourced a portfolio of vaccines for South Africa from different platforms. The arrival of the batch of vaccines from India's Serum Institute, is the first of many. The government is securing 40 million vaccines over the next 10 months for us to achieve so called "population immunity". This will take many months to achieve and is being done in stages, starting with healthcare and essential workers as determined by the National Department of Health.

South-Africa's Electronic Vaccination Data System (EVDS) is live, and whilst currently aimed at frontline Healthcare Workers, the platform will be used to eventually allocate vaccines to everyone in South Africa.

South Africa's first vaccinations are due to be administered from the middle of February 2021, with phase two of the programme- targeting essential employees, the elderly and those with comorbidities, expected to begin in the second quarter around June 2021.

Alongside hospitals and clinics listed as vaccination sites, large pharmaceutical retailers and other partners also feature in the roll out plan. Evergreen Health has also formally expressed willingness to co-operate with local health authorities as required. The National Department of Health, as sole administrators of the EVDS, have explicitly noted that the vaccination and enrollment on the system is voluntary. Evergreen Health is currently engaging with this new system.

Evergreen Health has on two occasions sent data through to the Department of Health in liaison with the Dept of Social Development, on the number of Evergreen residents and staff in all our villages, to secure vaccines as soon as they are available for the second phase of the roll out programme. Evergreen Health will keep you informed of any future developments with regards to the vaccine roll-out.

Yours sincerely,
Elize Porter
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Evergreen Health

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