



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

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Date: 26 November 2021

CIRCULAR NO: 89 OF 2021

GUIDANCE ON ADDITIONAL PRIMARY (THIRD) DOSE OF SINOPHARM VACCINE FOR IMMEDIATE IMPLEMENTATION

The Ministry of Health and Social Services introduced Sinopharm vaccine in the Namibian COVID-19 vaccination program on 19 March 2021, and has followed with keen interest the scientific discussions on additional vaccine doses and booster shots. As at 25 November 2021, 360,369 (24%) first doses and 225,113 (15%) second doses were administered and overall, 300,633 (20%) persons were fully vaccinated.

The risk of COVID-19 increases with age and among people with comorbidities and those that are immunocompromised. It has been documented that geometric mean titre of antibodies post vaccine introduction is lower in persons over 60 years (109.7 at 95% CI 97.4, 123.40 as compared to 18-59 years (156.2, 95% CI 149.8, 163.0)). Waning of immunity has also been documented. The neutralizing antibodies elicited by the two-dose vaccination schedule dropped from a peak of 31.2 AU/ml to 9.2 AU/ml 5 months after the second vaccination. The World Health Organization (WHO) has therefore recommended an additional (third) dose among persons 60 years and older, people with comorbidities and the immunocompromised.

Based on the WHO Strategic Advisory Group of Expert (SAGE) "*interim recommendations for use of the inactivated COVID-19 vaccine BIBP development by China National Biotec Group (CNBG), Sinopharm*", **the Ministry hereby introduced an additional primary dose of Sinopharm vaccine to person who have already completed their vaccination schedule.**

GUIDANCE ON ADDITIONAL PRIMARY (THIRD) DOSE OF SINOPHARM VACCINE FOR IMMEDIATE IMPLEMENTATION

The approach to the administration of the addition third doses is outline below:

1. Administer Sinopharm third dose ≥ 6 months (168 days) after second dose in:
 - a) All adult 60 years and older
 - b) Moderately to severely immunocompromised persons including those with active cancer, transplant recipients, those on active treatment with immunosuppressives, people with HIV not on treatment on not virally suppressed.
 - c) In addition, all individuals 18 years and older who have completed a two-dose scheduled of vaccination with Sinopharm and seeking to get vaccinated with a third dose of Sinopharm must not be turned away.
2. As a precautionary measure the observation period of 15 minutes after vaccination must be observed.
3. The third dose administered must be recorded on the vaccination card.
4. The Ministry's is collating evidence on other vaccine boosters and will keep the public informed in due course.

The content of this Circular must be brought to the attention of all staff members in the public and private sector who are involved in the vaccination activities.

Yours Sincerely,


BEN NANGOMBE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

