



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

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The Ministry of Health and Social Services is closely monitoring the reported new variant B.1.1.529 detected in South Africa, Botswana and Hong Kong and confirmed by the World Health Organization (WHO). As this is a new development, a lot remains unknown and unconfirmed around this new variant. However, the Ministry is on high alert and can confirm that the current measures of mask wearing, physical distancing, handwashing, and/or -sanitizing are still effective measures against the spread of the new variant.

Currently, Namibia has no report of the new variant. In the meantime, the Ministry urges the public to remain calm and to practice all COVID-19 preventative measures and health regulations. These include correct wearing of masks, physical/social distancing, hand washing avoiding crowded places, and ensuring good ventilations indoors, which are crucial to limit the transmission of COVID-19.

Most importantly, the Ministry of Health and Social Services strongly encourages the public to get vaccinated against COVID-19. Vaccination has proven to be safe and effective in reducing risk of serious illness, hospitalization and death. There is no evidence that the current vaccines against COVID-19 are not effective against the new variant. Getting vaccinated is the best weapon against COVID-19 variants of concern. We urge those who are yet to be vaccinated to please go out in numbers and get vaccinated to protect not only themselves but their relatives, friends, and colleagues.

The Ministry will continue to monitor the situation, including increasing its surveillance by subjecting positive samples to regular genome sequencing for possible identification of any variant of concern and interest. The Ministry will be updating the nation accordingly as it monitors this development.

Issued by:


BEN NANGOMBE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

