

COVID-19 VACCINE STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION WEEKLY REPORT

Week ending:	27 November 2020	Priority:	Routine
Security classification:	In Confidence	Tracking number:	2021-1563

	Action sought	Deadline
Rt Hon Jacinda Ardern Prime Minister	Note the contents of this Weekly Report	N/A
Hon Grant Robertson Minister of Finance		
Hon Dr Megan Woods Minister of Research, Science and Innovation		
Hon Chris Hipkins Minister for COVID-19 Response		
Hon Nanaia Mahuta Minister of Foreign Affairs		
Hon Andrew Little Minister of Health		



Dr Peter Crabtree
General Manager Science, Innovation and International
 27/ 11/ 2020



Maree Roberts
**Deputy Director-General, Systems Strategy
and Policy**
 27/ 11 / 2020

Minister's comments:



IN CONFIDENCE

COVID-19 Vaccine Strategy Implementation

Weekly Report

Week Ending 27 November 2020

RELEASED UNDER THE
OFFICIAL INFORMATION ACT

Purpose

This weekly joint report updates Ministers on key developments of the implementation of the COVID-19 Vaccine Strategy.

Workstreams

Advance Purchase Agreements

Contact: Poppy Haynes

Phone: 9(2)(a)

Progress this week

We have concluded negotiations with a third vaccine supplier in the past week, and will brief Ministers by Monday (30th) recommending the purchase of doses from this supplier. The proposed agreement is a final, legally binding supply agreement and is the only step needed to secure doses. 9(2)(ba)(i) & (ii)

This deal would add another reasonably wide population cover vaccine to our portfolio and complement the existing deals with Pfizer and Janssen.

9(2)(ba)(i) & (ii)

The Minister of Finance presented a statement to the House of Representatives this week, which notified that an indemnity was granted in favour of Pfizer. This is a requirement under the Public Finance Act 1989. Presenting this statement therefore puts the fact of the indemnity being granted (but not the terms of the indemnity) in the public domain. The communications team has prepared lines to support any questions on indemnities that result.

Immunisation Strategy and Programme

Contact: Mathew Parr

Phone: 9(2)(a)

Technology programme

Progress is being made into the technology components of the immunisation programme. This is primarily focused on developing National Immunisation Solution (NIS) that will replace the current National Immunisation Register. The NIS will be a critical component of delivering the COVID-19 vaccine and accurately record who receives which vaccine and when. An interim NIS will be completed by 1 January 2021, with a more complete solution to be ready by 1 March 2021.

A total of 8 technology projects are underway, including the NIS. Other components have commenced and include developing a vaccinator register to have a national view of who can deliver vaccinations in New Zealand, an inventory management solution to track the vaccine and consumables, and a solution for monitoring adverse reactions. The size and scale of these projects varies, and the team is rapidly scaling up to ensure enough resources are on hand to deliver these projects to support vaccine rollout.

Communications and engagement

As noted in the Vaccine Strategy Cabinet paper, there will be a transition in communications leadership from MBIE to MOH at the end of 2020. This is due to a shift in focus shifts from vaccine purchasing to an immunisation programme

and campaign. Efforts will be made to ensure this will be a seamless transition, and where possible consistency of personnel will be maintained.

We have received feedback from Ministers and Programme Governance that a more proactive approach to communications and engagement is needed, particularly in the lead-up to Christmas. To facilitate this, we are actively recruiting additional resources to support with this work, including specialists in Maori and Pacific comms, with dedicated people to manage stakeholder engagement. Content planning has commenced and we will look to proactively share information with the public ahead of the summer period.

Programme plan on a page

A change in planning assumption date was agreed between MBIE and MOH. The planning date for immunisation has now been confirmed as 1 March 2021, which has enabled us to accurately plan our activities for rolling out the Pfizer vaccine on this date. Contingencies will be in place to ensure we are ready to rollout the vaccine should it arrive early, including both the interim NIS and ultra-low temperature storage in place by 1 January 2021.

Research, Science and Manufacturing

Contact: Justine Daw

Phone: 9(2)(a)

Science advice

The Science & Clinical Review Panel, a subcommittee of the Taskforce's Science and Technical Advisory Group, has reviewed the recent interim Phase 3 trial results for the Pfizer and AstraZeneca vaccine candidates to ensure that the scientific assessments informing Ministerial decisions on advance purchase agreements, portfolio balance, risks and immunisation reflect the latest available information.

In parallel, the Vaccine Taskforce has prepared a suite of non-confidential summaries of vaccine candidates of potential interest to inform wider programme decision-making, support science communications, and facilitate international Taskforce collaborations with likemindeds. In the reporting period, these summaries have served to strengthen sharing of best practice between the New Zealand Taskforce and the Australian Government Department of Health, Australian Academy of Health and Medical Sciences and Australian National Centre for Immunisation Research and Surveillance. In New Zealand, they are informing early work by the National Immunisation Advisory Centre (IMAC) to support cross-system preparation for immunisation roll-out (e.g. education, training and health sector support and communications).

Global commercial collaborations

The Taskforce has responded to requests from NZTE and offshore MBIE Science and Innovation representatives to facilitate domestic introductions between several commercial vaccine interests in the US with an interest in collaborating with New Zealand-based vaccine developers, researchers and clinical trial experts. These interactions highlight that New Zealand is an increasingly an attractive destination for inwards investment, business development and potentially immigration of global leaders in vaccine development and manufacturing, particularly as the pandemic continues globally.

Joint updated from MBIE and MOH Communications

Contact: Karl Ferguson (MBIE)

Carl Billington (MOH)

Communications planning

We are preparing communications in anticipation of an APA announcement next week. We will work with your office to coordinate how this announcement will take place, and provide a draft media release, reactive Q&As and key messages.

We continue to work collaboratively with AOG Communications to provide content for their social media channels and

web page, and will provide additional content to support the APA announcement. Separately, we are in discussions with Siouxsie Wiles about potential content we could commission from her to support the channels and help tell the vaccine science story to the public. We are also in the process of developing a short animated video to explain the COVID-19 Vaccine Strategy.

We are progressing options to gather further research and insight into public sentiment towards potential vaccines. We will use these insights to inform our communications and engagement approaches, and to track vaccine sentiment.

We are also working with your offices to develop a proactive tactical plan, which includes identifying key spokespeople, and how we work with commentators, and community influencers to confirm the key messages we want to promote in the lead up to the Summer holiday season. The approach is designed to ensure the progress we are making on the vaccine strategy is well understood, and support ongoing public health COVID-19 messaging during the festive season.

Stakeholder engagement

We provided a Vaccine Strategy update from Peter Crabtree to agency communications teams for distribution to relevant frontline staff. The purpose of the email was to provide a direct update on the work of the Taskforce to key staff to ensure they were aware of progress made towards securing a safe and effective vaccine.

MBIE and MOH will meet with DIA this week to discuss how best to engage with ethnic communities.

Both agencies will also brief the Early Childhood Education Sector next week, providing an update on the Vaccine Strategy and to hear any concerns from the sector.

Media management

We met with the Science Media Centre to discuss opportunities for media briefings. The intent is for the media briefing to coincide with future announcements, and we will work towards aligning this with the next APA announcement.

Both MBIE and MOH continue to receive a steady stream of media queries related to vaccine trial announcements (Pfizer and Moderna), Medsafe approval processes, storage and distribution processes, vaccines for the Pacific and the sequencing of immunisation rollout. Your office received reactive lines on each topic.

MBIE also provided reactive lines to your office to support potential media queries after the Gamaleya Centre released interim trial results for the Sputnik V vaccine.

Upcoming Briefings

Due Date	Briefing Number	Title	Sign Out Manager
27 Nov	2021-1537	Purchase of COVID-19 vaccines from AstraZeneca Ltd	Peter Crabtree

Cabinet Paper

Due Date	Briefing Number	Title	Sign Out Manager
07 Dec (to Cab)	2021-1124	COVID-19 Vaccine Strategy: Update on vaccine purchasing	Peter Crabtree
07 Dec (to Cab)		Update on the COVID-19 Immunisation Strategy and Programme	MOH
07 Dec (to Cab)		Support for Pacific and Global Vaccine Access and Roll-out	MFAT

Ministerial Official Information Act Requests

Number	Due to MO	Due to Requestor	Requestor	Request	Status	Sign out
OIA20-131	4 Dec	11 Dec	9(2)(a)	Copies of any briefings the Minister has received from Government Departments (except for Briefings to Incoming Ministers, which I understand are being proactively released) between 6 November 2020 and 13 November 2020 under the Official Information Act.	Scoping	Poppy Haynes