



Fifth Meeting of the PAAC Public Hearing Summary Wednesday, March 31, 2021

Inquiry Subject:

An inquiry into the preparedness and response of public authorities to the COVID-19 pandemic in Trinidad and Tobago with regard to the procurement and distribution of COVID-19 vaccines.

Committee Members:

The following Committee Members were present at the meeting:

- Mrs. Bridgid Mary Annisette-George - Chairman
- Dr. Lackram Bodoie - Vice-Chairman
- Ms. Amrita Deonaraine - Member
- Mr. Hassel Bacchus - Member
- Mr. Wade Mark - Member
- Mrs. Ayanna Webster-Roy - Member
- Mrs. Lisa Morris-Julian - Member
- Ms. Yokymma Bethelmy - Member
- Mr. Stephen Mc Clashie - Member

Witnesses who appeared:

MINISTRY OF HEALTH

- Mr. Asif Ali - Permanent Secretary
- Ms. Melanie Noel - Deputy Permanent Secretary
- Ms. Brenda Jeffers - Deputy Permanent Secretary
- Dr. Roshan Parasram - Chief Medical Officer
- Mr. Lawrence Jaisingh - Director, Health Policy, Research and Planning
- Ms. Anesa Doodath-Siboo - Principal Pharmacist (Ag.)
- Mr. Salim Pegus - Project Manager
- Ms. Candice Alcantara - Manager, Corporate Communications

Key Issues Discussed:

1. The clarification on the acronym and meaning of 'EUL' and 'EUA';
2. The difference between receiving 'EUL' or 'EUA' and a full licence;

3. The number of doses of the vaccine and the percentage of the population to receive the vaccine per immunity;
4. The expiration date of the 33,600 vaccines received from the COVAX Facility;
5. The category and number of persons targeted to receive the vaccines;
6. The timeframe for the administering of the second dose of the vaccines to the persons in receipt of the first dose of the vaccines received from Barbados;
7. The number of persons in the healthcare system;
8. The role of the private sector in the procurement of the vaccines;
9. The challenges in procuring the vaccines;
10. The estimated vaccine rollout cost;
11. The details of the vaccine rollout in Tobago;
12. The total cost of contracted services to deliver the COVID-19 vaccines;
13. The status of the bilateral discussions as it relates to the procurement of vaccines;
14. The number of Astra-Zeneca vaccines administered regionally and internationally;
15. The recommended timeframe as stated by the World Health Organisation for administering the second dose of vaccines;
16. The arrangements in place to minimize the theft of vaccines;
17. The security measures in place at the storage facilities;
18. The plans in place to ensure there is no interference with the integrity of vaccines when received;
19. The measures in place to prevent counterfeit vaccines from entering the borders;
20. The details of the twenty-one vaccine distribution centers;
21. The persons who should not be administered the vaccine;
22. A status report on the planning strategy for advance purchasing of vaccines;
23. The number of vaccines needed to ensure adequate coverage of the population to be brought back to normalcy;
24. The development of Information Technology (IT) Solution;
25. The details on information to be published on the IT Solution;
26. The lessons learnt and remedial actions taken with regard to the theft and loss of pharmaceuticals at the pharmacy at North West Regional Health Authority;
27. The details on the stages of transportation, storage and distribution of vaccines;
28. The process for persons not registered in the Public Health Care System to receive vaccination;
29. The consideration of medical students training in the health care system to be vaccinated;
30. The revision of the information published in the media and on the Ministry's website;

31. The communication plan in place to address misinformation published on social media;
32. The plan going forward with regard to children's safety and attendance at schools;
33. The status of town hall public sensitization activity and the tentative date of meeting;
34. The development of an App to use as a tool for disseminating information to the public;
35. The status of the negotiation of vaccines from Africa;
36. The status of revisiting the quarantine policy for returning nationals given the receipt of the vaccines;
37. The manpower available at the Ministry to monitor the selected vaccine distribution centers;
38. The status of the ongoing studies of antibody testing for post vaccination events;
39. A description of the online appointment process for vaccination;
40. The measures in place to prevent 'favouritism' in the administering of vaccines;
41. The details of the COVID-19 Vaccine Task Force;
42. The availability of consumables to satisfy the receipt of 140,000 vaccines;
43. The process for vaccinations at the Health Centres and clinics; and
44. The process for vaccinating non-nationals.

Next Meeting:

The next Public Hearing of the Committee will be held on **Wednesday April 14, 2021**, at **1:30 p.m.** At this meeting the Committee intends to commence an examination into the internal controls and expenditure of the Tobago Regional Health Authority (TRHA).

PAAC Secretariat
March 31, 2021