

Vaccine roll-out strategy: Virtual meeting feedback

A virtual meeting took place on 12 January 2021 between the MEC/HOD and labour. The National Department of Health committed to provide vaccines as part of the COVID-19 containment strategy. Subsequently, the Department established a Vaccine Technical Working Group at national level to develop strategy and mechanisms for seamless distribution and administration of the vaccine.

The Limpopo Department of Health saw it fit to engage with stakeholders, including labour, as part of the preparation to ensure the proper development and implementation of the vaccine roll-out strategy. Although there are a lot of uncertainties regarding the type and quantity of the vaccines to be received by the Province, proper planning is necessary. It is against this background that Department convened the meeting with labour to present the strategy and solicit inputs from labour.

Critically, the strategy points that:

- Institutional OHS Committees will be critical to coordinate the distribution hence must be resuscitated where ineffective or nonexistent;
- The Human Resources needs will be addressed through COVID-19 specific appointments that are already underway;
- Capacitation of vaccinators must precede implementation of the plan although internal capacity would also be utilised;
- Storage, distribution and security of vaccines must be thoroughly planned/considered;
- Vaccines would be introduced through a phased approach where phase one would target health workers, although previous confirmed cases for COVID-19 positive cases and all those with a positive antibody test would not be prioritised;
- Vaccines are not a quick fix hence non-pharmacological interventions will remain the bedrock of the COVID-19 response for the foreseeable future for which the Province will continue to advocate; and
- A hybrid financial model would be implemented where the private sector would also be involved, and both the national and provincial departments would be responsible for certain aspects of the project.

Labour was invited to submit inputs by 15 January 2021 and members are invited to submit inputs to queen.seema@psa.co.za. Members will be informed of developments.

GENERAL MANAGER