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# CALLING ON YOUNG PEOPLE TO STEP FORWARD AND GET THE JOB:

**WITH YOUR HELP, WE CAN BEAT COVID - 19**

THE COVID-19 vaccination programme is now in its 33rd week, having started on the 17th of May 2021 with the vaccination of people aged 60 years old and older. Vaccination is now open to all people in South Africa who are aged 12 years and older, including undocumented people.

We had hoped to see young people turn up in numbers for vaccination, particularly after the exams and during the festive season. However, as of the end of last week, we had vaccinated just 126 887 people from this age group, which is about only a tenth of our target of 1, 305 712.

This literally means that only 1 out of every 10 youth between the ages of 12-17 years have at least received their first dose of Pfizer. Overall, we have now vaccinated 2, 967 million people in the Province, with 4 251 yet to be fully vaccinated, which again is cause for great concern.

The danger of young people not getting vaccinated is that they can get infected with COVID-19 at school or in the community, and come back home and infect their relatives at home, who might become severely ill or die.

Even though it looks like our Fourth Wave of infections is subsiding, we are nevertheless concerned by the generally low uptake of the vaccination programme – not least because of the ever-present risk of future variants, which may be deadlier than others that we have seen.

This makes it even more urgent that we get support from parents and our educators, to help us mobilise young people to come forward and get vaccinated.

We are worried about the false and confusing messages about vaccines and the vaccination programme which are being disseminated, mainly on social media platforms, which is where our youth spend a lot of their time.

That is why we will soon be launching a new and improved strategy to rally more people to get the jab, so that they can enjoy its benefits and help move our country and Province closer to achieving population immunity.

We call on parents to guide their children on where to access accurate information about vaccines and the vaccination programme. Information and guidance is available on the **National Vaccination Toll Free line:**

**0800 029 999.**

## Here are some of the more common COVID - 19 vaccine concerns and responses to frequently asked questions:

### 1. Has anyone died from Covid-19 vaccines?

**Truth:** No one has been found to have died as a result of COVID-19 vaccines in South Africa.

### 2. Will taking the COVID-19 vaccines affect my fertility?

**Truth:** It is not true that COVID-19 vaccines cause infertility. Scientific studies have been performed where people who have been vaccinated were followed, and were found to have successfully conceived and carried successful pregnancies to full term, giving birth to healthy babies, without any problems. So, COVID-19 vaccines are not known to cause infertility.

### 3. Will vaccinating for COVID-19 negatively affect my sexual drive

**Truth:** COVID-19 vaccines will not negatively affect your sexual drive. Covid19 infection does not only affect your lungs but can actually affect most of your organs through direct infection and or severe wide spread inflammation.

### 4. Will people who are vaccinated all die in 2 years?

**Truth:** There is simply no scientific basis for this. Vaccines have been tested and found to be safe for use. So, this is nothing but fear-mongering, which should be ignored.

### 5. Will vaccinating be unsafe if I have other medical conditions?

**Truth:** COVID-19 vaccines are particularly beneficial in people with underlying medical conditions as these individuals stand an even higher risk of severe illness, which will need hospitalization, or may even lead to death from acquiring a Covid-19 infection.

### 6. Can I get COVID - 19 after taking a COVID - 19 vaccine?

**Truth:** It is not possible to get COVID - 19 from a COVID - 19 vaccine as there is no whole living virus in the vaccine. While it is possible to be infected with COVID-19 after getting vaccinated, the vaccine will have given your body the strength and ability to fight the virus and prevent severe illness or death.

Vaccinating for COVID - 19 remains the most effective way to protect ourselves and our loved ones from getting severely sick or even dying from COVID - 19.



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