



NATIONAL NEWS FLASH



SERVING EDUCATION SINCE 1904

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EDUCATION VACCINATION ROLL-OUT

In National News Flash 25 of 2021 members were informed that Johnson and Johnson vaccines have been secured for the education sector of South Africa.

After a slight delay as a result of decisions by the Federal Drug Administration (FDA) in the USA, the Minister of Basic Education announced that a shipment of 300 000 doses of the vaccine will arrive in South Africa today, exclusively for education workers. Following clearance by the South African Health Products Regulatory Authority (SAHPRA) the roll-out to the education sector is expected to start in earnest on 17 June 2021.

Members ought not have any concerns about this particular shipment of the vaccines as it has been cleared by the FDA, while the SAHPRA will not allow its distribution if it does not meet its safety standards, as it so aptly demonstrated when it halted the distribution of the initial AstraZenica vaccine batch.

To gauge the attitude of education staff on the question of vaccination, the education unions recently, jointly, conducted a survey in this regard. An encouraging 74% of respondents indicated that they would opt for vaccination as soon as vaccines became available to protect themselves, their family and their school and learners. Of the 26% who indicated that they would not take the vaccine, the main reasons proffered were a lack of trust that the vaccine will work or a lack of information.

Knowledge is power. Members who still feel uncertain about vaccination are encouraged to visit the COVID-19 website of the Department of Health (<https://sacoronavirus.co.za/vaccine-updates/>) for more information on this subject.

As indicated in the above-mentioned National News Flash, the vaccination process for education staff will be facilitated by the Department of Basic Education which relieves staff from the burden of having to register for vaccination with the Department of Health. Please again familiarise yourselves with the vaccination process as recorded in the News Flash.

NAPTOSA wishes to reiterate that the vaccination process is voluntary, but at the same time we urge our members to embrace this special opportunity to be vaccinated, for your own sake and

those of your loved ones. NAPTOSA has fought long and hard to have education staff recognised as frontline workers and to have them next in line, behind health workers, for vaccination.

While we are concerned that the earmarked 300 000 doses might not be sufficient to cover all those who will be opting for vaccination, we trust that the next batch of the vaccines will follow soon. We are already in discussions about a possible next roll-out phase because it remains NAPTOSA's position that ALL education workers should be vaccinated.

As soon as details about the provincial roll-out processes become available, the provinces will inform members accordingly.

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