

දුරකථන) 0112669192 , 0112675011
தொலைபேசி) 0112698507 , 0112694033
Telephone) 0112675449 , 0112675280

ෆැක්ස්) 0112693866
பெக்ஸ்) 0112693869
Fax) 0112692913

විද්‍යුත් තැපෑල,) postmaster@health.gov.lk
மின்ஞ்சல் முகவரி)
e-mail)

වෙබ් අඩවිය) www.health.gov.lk
இணையத்தளம்)



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சுகாதார் அமைச்சு
Ministry of Health

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திகதி) 27/04/2021
Date)

Provincial Directors of Health Services
Regional Directors of Health Services
Heads of Health Institutions

Commencement of the vaccination programme for second dose of the COVISHIELD vaccine for the Health Care Workers

Based on the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Communicable Diseases, the Ministry of Health has decided to initiate the vaccination programme for the **second dose** of the COVISHIELD vaccine for the Health care Workers with effect from **28th April 2021**. This programme should be conducted adhering to the previous guidelines issued on the COVISHIELD Covid-19 vaccination campaign (issued by the DGHS, dated 28. 01. 2021 and 15. 02. 2021, numbered EPID/400/2019/n-COV/ Vaccine). Therefore, please inform the responsible staff in your province/ district/ institution/ unit to make necessary arrangements to ensure smooth roll out of the vaccination programme.

The heads of the institution should ensure that only the health care workers who are affiliated to the health institution and have already received the first dose of the COVISHIELD vaccine are vaccinated through this programme, due to the limited availability of the COVISHIELD vaccines. **Individuals who have not received the first dose of the COVISHIELD vaccine at a previous session, are not eligible to be vaccinated in this programme.** A separate programme will be arranged for such individuals in the future.

Measures should also be made to obtain the written informed consent from all recipients prior to vaccination, using the consent form annexed (Annex I).

Considering the current developments with regard to possible Adverse Events Following COVISHIELD vaccination, necessary precautions should be taken to avoid and detect possible serious AEFIs. **The vaccine recipients should be informed to seek prompt medical advice from a government hospital in the presence of following signs and symptoms from day 3 up to 3 weeks following vaccination:**

- Shortness of breath
- Chest pain
- Neurological symptoms, including severe and persistent headaches, blurred vision, seizures/ fits
- Severe abdominal pain
- Severe leg pain and/ or swelling
- Tiny blood spots under the skin beyond the site of injection
- Any other unusual symptoms or signs

Presence of such symptoms following vaccination should be informed to the Epidemiology Unit promptly by the respective institutions.

Recognizing the importance of early identification and proper management of serious AEFIs following COVID-19 vaccination, a multi-disciplinary team has been appointed, and a designated unit has been identified at the National Hospital of Sri Lanka for the management of such patients. Dr. Upul Dissanayake, Consultant Physician, has been identified as the focal point of this team (contact number: 0718670568/ 0773023962).

Further information on this can be obtained through the letters issued by DGHS on "Revised Guidance on Information to be given to COVID 19 vaccine recipients", dated 27. 04. 2021, numbered EPID/400/n-CoV/Vaccine, and "Establishment of multi-disciplinary team for the management of patients with neurological complications with a history of recent COVID-19 vaccination", dated 26. 03. 2021, numbered EPID/400/n-CoV/Vaccine.



Dr. Asela Gunawardena

Director General of Health Services 385, Rev. Baddegama Wimalawansa Thero Mawatha,
Colombo 10.

Dr. ASELA GUNAWARDENA
Director General of Health Services
Ministry of Health
"Suwasiripaya"
385, Rev. Baddegama Wimalawansa Thero Mawatha,
Colombo 10.

Cc: Deputy Director General- PHS I
Deputy Director General- PHS II
Deputy Director General/ Medical Services I
Deputy Director General/ Medical Services II
Chief Epidemiologist
Provincial & District CCPs
Regional Epidemiologists