

## **MEDIA STATEMENT**

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### **MINERALS COUNCIL URGES EMPLOYEES OVER THE AGE OF 60 TO REGISTER FOR VACCINATIONS, AND TO ASSIST FAMILY MEMBERS AND NEIGHBOURS**

**Johannesburg, 13 May 2021.** The Minerals Council urges employees over the age of 60 to register for the second phase of the COVID-19 vaccine roll-out due to start on 17 May 2021, and appeals to all employees to assist their family members, neighbours and friends over the age of 60 to register to receive the vaccine.

While there are only around 6,000 industry employees over the age of 60, almost everyone will live with or know someone older than 60. Getting vaccinated if you are over 60 is critically important given that people over the age of 60 are especially vulnerable and are three times more likely to be hospitalised and 15 times more likely to die due to complications related to COVID-19 than people under the age of 40.

Says Dr Thuthula Balfour, Head: Health at the Minerals Council: “The COVID-19 pandemic has wreaked havoc the world over. Many people feel disempowered as their lives and livelihoods have been affected and, in some instances, forever changed.

“The vaccine offers hope that we can return to a better place. But, we can only get there if our society achieves community immunity. As the mining industry, we have set our sights high. We have achieved a 90% TB screening rate in the past and we will do our best to vaccinate as many people for COVID-19 as possible to achieve similar rates. It is an ambitious target, but would contribute significantly to better immunity in mining communities across the country.”

Vaccinations will be administered free of charge to all citizens, with medical aids expected to cover the cost of around 7 million members and the state absorbing the balance. Many mining companies have indicated that they will support community vaccinations in line with national priorities.

“It’s up to us to be the difference we want to see in the world. While many people will be vaccinated, we must continue to be mindful and adhere to COVID-19 prevention measures



such as keeping a safe social distance, wearing our masks and washing our hands regularly. As we decide to be vaccinated, it is important to bear in mind that our choices have the potential to affect the lives of others,” concludes Dr Balfour.

For more information see <https://www.mineralscouncil.org.za/minerals-council-position-on-covid-19#wechoosevaccination>

Register online at <https://vaccine.enroll.health.gov.za/#/>

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