

MEDIA STATEMENT

MINING SECTOR WORKPLACE VACCINATION SITES GEARING UP TO SUPPORT NATIONAL VACCINATION ROLL-OUT

Johannesburg, 25 June 2021. The Minerals Council has continued to work closely with Business for South Africa (B4SA), and through it the National Department of Health (NDoH), towards the establishment of workplace vaccination sites.

For the mining sector, the goal is to ensure that mines are ready to ensure that employees younger than 60 are able to be vaccinated as soon as national policy makes it possible. It is envisaged that, subject to NDoH approvals, some mine vaccination sites may extend their services to employees' families and others in surrounding communities or provide support to community vaccination programmes.

There are currently 58 mining occupational health sites that have applied to register as primary vaccination sites in terms of the protocols set up through B4SA. Of these, 21 have already received the required permits from the NDoH as one step towards readying the sites for operation.

In addition, a number of others are preparing, or are ready, to operate as secondary sites in terms of that protocol. Secondary sites are associated with particular primary sites, which could be one of the registered mine-based primary sites or a nearby registered pharmacy, hospital, clinic or general practitioner.

All workplace sites have to meet detailed established minimum criteria to store vaccines and possess permits from the NDoH to serve as accredited vaccination sites. Each site has to undergo a very detailed process as regulated and prescribed by the NDoH in order to be registered.

The first mining vaccination site to begin vaccinating was Impala Platinum, which started on 24 May. It was one of five workplace sites nationally (not only mining sector) to be selected



by the NDoH as a pilot site where the model for workplace vaccination is being tested and lessons learnt in delivering vaccination services to workers.

Four other companies have sites that more recently begun vaccinating: Sasol, Thungela Resources, Harmony and Sibanye-Stillwater.

It should be noted that all these sites currently, and in the future, will operate under the procedures of the NDoH with respect to registration of sites, loading of workers onto the EVDS, procurement of vaccines from government and delivery of vaccination services according to the age bands decided by government. No private sector companies, including mining companies, acquire vaccines independently.

It is the intention for workplace sites to start with the over 60s. But since there are few such employees on mining sites, they will then move fully into vaccinating those in the next age band of 50 years and above and then 40 years and above as the NDoH's guideline for workplace vaccination services in Phase 2.

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