

The National Department of Health together with South African Medical Research Council will next week Monday, 8 November commence with the inoculation of almost 500 thousands health workers with a booster shot of J&J vaccine under Sisonke 2 study.

Why targeting those participated in Sisonke Study?

- This is mainly targeting all the health care workers who participated and received their J&J vaccine dose through Sisonke study 1 between 17 February and 17 May this year.
- Even if you are pregnant or breastfeeding

Where will be boosters be offered?

- Sisonke booster vaccinations will be offered at selected sites to be announced in all nine provinces.

When will the rest of HCWs and public get booster shot?

- Meanwhile, the Department will keep the public informed about the booster shots for the rest of the health workers and public.

Why do we need booster shot?

- According to scientific evidence, boosters are needed at some stage of the pandemic especially due to emerging new variants.
- Due to waning (progressive decrease of immunity) of immunity, the need for booster doses is evolving and some countries have decided to offer booster doses to certain high-risk populations like the elderly and health workers or other frontline workers.
- Booster dose is safe and provides protection against severe infections

What is the purpose of booster shot for Health Care Workers? –

- They enhance protection against infection, severe disease and death.
- Reduce transmission in health care facilities and reduce absenteeism amongst health care workers due to infection due to isolation if infected, especially during the height of infections

How do they register to get booster shot? –

- They will automatically receive SMS invitation to participate in Sisonke 2
- The SMS will have a link for informed consent to be completed
- They will receive a vaccination voucher starting with 'BD-'(Booster Dose)

Those not qualifying for booster shot include?

- Those received first dose other than J&J
- Those received first dose outside Sisonke, regardless of which vaccine
- Those who have already accessed a booster vaccination through other means
- Please check the SAMRC Sisonke website for details:
<http://sisonkestudy.samrc.ac.za/>
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Who pays for the vaccines used in Sisonke?

- The vaccine stock for both Sisonke 1 and 2 were offered/donated by Jansen and Jansen, the government is not paying as part of the contribution in the study?

Why not Pfizer booster shot?

- SAHPRA has not yet approved the administration of Pfizer vaccine as a booster?
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What is the duration of study?

- 5-6 weeks, to end in Mid-December 2021
- Discussions are underway about the booster shots for the rest of healthcare workers and general public.