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MINUTES OF THE 68th MEETING OF THE TWELFTH ANGUILLA
EXECUTIVE COUNCIL HELD ON THURSDAY 2nd DECEMBER 2021 AT 9.00 AM

- PRESENT:
- Her Excellency the Governor, Ms Dileeni Daniel-Selvaratnam
 - The Honourable Premier and Minister for Finance and Health,
Dr Ellis Webster
 - The Hon Deputy Governor, Mr Perin Bradley
 - The Honourable Minister for Social Development, Cultural Affairs,
Youth Affairs, Gender Affairs, Education and Library Services,
Ms Dee-Ann Kentish-Rogers
 - The Honourable Minister for Home Affairs, Immigration, Labour,
Human Rights, Constitutional Affairs, Information and Broadcasting,
Lands and Physical Planning, Mr Kenneth Hodge
 - The Honourable Minister for Infrastructure, Communications,
Utilities, Housing and Tourism, Mr Haydn Hughes
 - The Honourable Minister for Economic Development, Commerce,
Information Technology, Environment and Natural Resources,
Mr Kyle Hodge
 - The Hon Attorney General, Mr Dwight Horsford
 - Clerk to Executive Council, Mrs Angela Hughes
- IN ATTENDANCE:
- Financial Specialist, Mr Stephen Turnbull
 - Hon Parliamentary Secretary for Economic Development,
Mrs Quincia Gumbs-Marie
 - Hon Special Ministerial Assistant to the Hon Minister for Social
Development/Education, Mr Merrick Richardson

EX MIN 21/388

CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES

Hon Parliamentary Secretary for Economic Development, Hon Special Ministerial Assistant to the Hon Minister for Social Development/ Education and Financial Specialist remained.

Council confirmed the Minutes of the 67th Meeting of Executive Council held on Thursday 25th November, 2021.

MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

In relation to Ex Min 21/377 the outstanding tax compliance information shall be provided by next week.

In relation to Ex Min 21/382 the information pertaining to the identity of the beneficial owner is awaited.

EX MIN 21/389

COVID-19 UPDATE

Hon Parliamentary Secretary for Economic Development, Hon Special Ministerial Assistant to the Hon Minister for Social Development/ Education and Financial Specialist remained. The following persons joined:

PS Health, Mr Foster Rogers
Director CDU, Mrs Twyla Richardson-Bradshaw
Health Planner, Ms Rochelle Rogers

Epidemiology***Global overview***

The WHO Epidemiology report for November 30 is unavailable.

Emergence of Variant of Concern – Omicron (B.1.1.529)

The newly declared Variant of Concern (VoC) is Omicron.

Omicron (B.1.1.529) was first reported in South Africa. However, over 20 countries in the world have now reported cases in almost all WHO Regions.

All viruses mutate however this variant has several mutations on parts of the virus that may affect how it behaves, the mutations to the spike protein of this variant are concerning. The transmissibility of this variant, the impact as it relates to severe disease and death and how protective the vaccines are against it are unknown. What is known is that the variant can still be detected using PCR testing; more data is needed on whether other test types can detect Omicron.

It is estimated that in another 2 weeks it will be possible to gain an initial understanding of how this variant may impact the key metrics in this pandemic, including transmissibility and impact on severe illness and death.

Caribbean Region

The total number of confirmed cases is 2,166,199 in 35 countries/territories (including the 26 CARPHA Member States) and more than 449,900 in CARICOM Member States. The new total represents a 0.8% increase since the report on November 23. Some Member States continue to experience increasing positive case numbers. Cluster outbreaks through to community transmission of the virus, with increasing hospitalizations and deaths continues.

Anguilla

As of December 1, 2021, the total number of confirmed cases since the beginning of the pandemic in early 2020 is 1414 with 1323 recoveries, 3 deaths and 91 active cases. Among the active cases, three are imported. Six persons are currently admitted to the Isolation Unit. The age range of the admitted patients is 25 – 89 years, there are three males and three females, five persons are unvaccinated and one person is fully vaccinated.

Anguilla received notification from CARPHA that for the first time the Lambda (C.37) Variant of Interest was detected in a sample sent for sequencing. This was an imported case from St Kitts.

Vaccination Deployment Update

Distribution

Since Monday 8th November, 1419 doses have been administered representing:

- 504 first doses
- 3 second doses
- 912 boosters

The breakdown by age for Pfizer first doses is as follows:

- 388 persons age 12-17
- 59 persons age 18 - 34
- 41 persons age 35 - 49
- 12 persons age 50 - 64
- 7 persons age 65+

Further, on Friday 26th November, 50 AstraZeneca second doses were administered.

Vaccination distribution will continue via weekly scheduled clinics at health centres. Whilst already established at Welches Polyclinic work is ongoing to establish the service at the Western Polyclinic.

Vaccine Uptake

As of December 1, 10,063 persons had received their first dose representing 80% of the initial target population figure of 12,600 persons (or 84% of the revised eligible estimate). Thus far, 9,214 persons (73% of target) have received their second dose and 912 boosters have been administered. In a population estimate of 15,500 total persons, this would represent 65% of the population having received the first dose and 59% of the population having received two doses. The breakdown of first doses by age is as follows:

- 388 persons age 12 - 17
- 3014 persons age 18 - 34
- 2878 persons age 35 - 49
- 2476 persons age 50 - 64

- 1314 persons age 65+

Vaccine Booster Eligibility

The booster eligibility criteria was expanded to include persons aged over 40 and essential service bodies. An uptick in booster doses was observed compared to the previous week. The JCVI Guidance now recommends the expansion of boosters to persons aged over 18 years and a 3 month period between the administration of the second dose and a booster dose.

Further, the JCVI has recommended offering second doses to persons aged 16 - 17 years old, a minimum of 8 weeks after their first dose and to 12 - 15 year olds at 12 weeks after their first dose.

Revised estimates for additional doses to support the above mentioned activities have been submitted to the UKG.

COVID-19 Response Measures

The Ministry is continuing to monitor the emergence of Omicron and if any changes to the current control measures are recommended they will advise. Our arrival RT-PCR test should be maintained as the variant can be detected with PCR methods. The Ministry will continue to submit samples to CARPHA for genomic sequencing.

According to three federal health officials, in order to reduce the spread of the Omicron variant, the Biden administration is preparing stricter testing requirements for all travelers entering the United States, including returning Americans. The measures proposed are largely in place in Anguilla already with the exception of quarantine for vaccinated individuals. The Ministry of Health will monitor the situation over the next couple of weeks before making any new recommendations, if necessary, to reduce the risk of Omicron entering the local population.

Council:

- 1) thanked the health team for their continued hard work;

- 2) noted that the fourth COVID-19 death was recorded today;
and
- 3) approved the expansion of the priority group for boosters to include all persons aged over 18 years old who received their second dose 3 months ago. Work is ongoing to prepare the Western Polyclinic to also deliver booster doses.

Council authorized the issue of the Action Sheet before confirmation of the Minutes.

Action: PS, HLTH; PS, FIN; PS, EDCITENR; BD; ACC, GEN;
HON, DG; HON, AG; MINS OF GOV'T
