



Arrival of COVAX Vaccinations

**The Most Hon. Dr. Hubert Minnis
Prime Minister and Minister of Finance**

Tuesday, 3 August 2021

Minister Wells;

Officials;

Members of the Vaccine Consultative
Committee;

Members of the Press;

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Good Morning,

Today's delivery of 33,600 doses of the
AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine
represents the third tranche or batch of pre-
paid vaccines The Bahamas has received
through the COVAX Facility.

I once again thank the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) for its generous assistance.

From this tranche, we will return 5,000 doses of vaccines that we were fortunate to receive from Antigua and Barbuda as part of an exchange in late June.

This exchange and the donation received from the British Overseas Territories of Montserrat and Anguilla,

helped us to continue our vaccination program without interruption.

I thank our Caribbean neighbors, Antigua and Barbuda, Montserrat and Anguilla, as well the U.K. Government for their collaboration and assistance.

Starting today, now that we have more vaccines, and as a part of the continued aggressive roll out of vaccines, more appointments for first and second doses

will be made available on New Providence and Grand Bahama.

Please visit vax.gov.bs to make your appointment to receive the vaccine.

The administration of second doses of the vaccine continues at the Loyola Hall Vaccination Center on Gladstone Road on Thursday and Friday of this week.

Starting next Monday, August 9th, additional centers will be opened on New Providence.

On Monday the 9th of August, the Church of God of Prophecy on East Street site will be opened.

This will be followed by the Baha Mar Convention Center on Tuesday the 10th of August, followed by the St. Anslem's Church Hall on Wednesday, the 11th of August.

By next week Wednesday, all of these sites, for a total of four vaccination centers, will be operating on New Providence to administer first and second doses of the vaccine.

Walk-up appointments will be available at: the Church of God of Prophecy and St. Anselm's Church vaccination centers.

I thank the Church of God of Prophecy, the Roman Catholic Archdiocese and Baha Mar for the use of their facilities; the

vaccinators, observers, the many volunteers and the public for their support and cooperation.

We could not do this without your support.

Health officials and volunteers are currently working on a schedule to continue vaccinations on the Family Islands.

More information will be announced on this phase of the roll out.

Updated information will also be provided on the current use of the AstraZeneca vaccine, and more information will be forthcoming as our vaccine supplies increase.

For those waiting to make an appointment for a second dose of the vaccine, I encourage you to book your appointment as soon as possible.

If you haven't received your first dose yet, please book an appointment online or visit one of the walk-up centers as they become available.

As I said in my National Address last week, The Bahamas Government is working very closely with Caricom and the United States Government regarding a donation of vaccines from the U.S. Government.

We are working hard to prepare to receive additional vaccines.

With the help of U.S. Embassy in Nassau we are securing essential equipment and supplies that are necessary as we continue to roll out vaccines throughout the country.

Last week, we received four ultra-cold freezers donated by the U.S. Embassy.

Three of these freezers will be used at the Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI) Unit on New Providence.

One of the freezers will be transported to Grand Bahama for use there.

The Embassy is also generously donating the Personal Protective Equipment, known as PPEs, needed to safely use ultra-cold freezers.

I thank the U.S. Embassy for all of its logistical and other support.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I would like to emphasize that throughout the pandemic that the SARS-COV-2 virus, which causes the COVID-19 disease, has continued to change.

There have been many new variants of the virus and there will be more.

We were taught in medical school how quickly a virus adapts to efforts to stop its spread, especially when a large number of people remain unvaccinated.

This is why it is important for as many people to get vaccinated as quickly as possible.

This is the most effective way to address and to slow the spread of a virus and its variants.

Indeed, the best medical and scientific experts in the world have cautioned that because the virus that causes COVID-19 continues to change very quickly, that governments have to be prepared to constantly and quickly respond to ever changing circumstances.

I recognize that this can be frustrating.

But this is the nature of viruses.

This is the nature of a pandemic.

We have to be willing to adapt and to adjust as quickly as possible to circumstances within individual countries.

Just about every country in the world has had to continue to make adjustments throughout the pandemic.

This is also why we often have to be able to adapt and to adjust quickly to the circumstances and needs of our individual island groups in The Bahamas.

This is why we announced yesterday, new testing requirements for international and domestic travelers, which come into effect this coming Friday, August 6th.

For more information on these adjusted requirements please visit the Ministry of Tourism's website: Bahamas.com.

You may also visit opm.gov.bs.

Let me close by repeating my call and national appeal for retired medical

professionals to volunteer their services to help with the vaccination effort.

We are mobilizing as many people as possible to help with vaccinations.

If you wish to volunteer, please contact the Ministry of Health.

I have told our medical professionals that I will also volunteer wherever they need me to help administer vaccines.

I am now happy to take some questions
from members of the press.
