

Appendix X

COVID-19 Vaccine Portfolio Update – AstraZeneca, Janssen and COVAX 2.0

Date: 17 December 2021

To: Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern and COVID-19 Vaccine Ministers

From: Maree Roberts, Deputy Director-General, System Strategy and Policy

Subject: COVID-19 Vaccine Portfolio Update

Purpose of report

1. This memo provides an update on:
 - a. future expected domestic use of AstraZeneca's vaccine and how access to the vaccine is being managed
 - b. delivery of Janssen's vaccine
 - c. progress executing the donation of 5.8 million doses of AstraZeneca and 1.5 million doses of Janssen's vaccine to the COVAX Facility to support global vaccination efforts
 - d. progress towards New Zealand's participation in COVAX 2.0.

Background

Use of AstraZeneca's vaccine in the Programme

2. To date, the COVID-19 Vaccine Immunisation Programme (CVIP) has been based primarily around Pfizer's COVID-19 vaccine.
3. However, Vaccine Ministers previously agreed to secure access to up to 100,000 doses of AstraZeneca's vaccine for use in New Zealand as a contingency, and for individuals unable or hesitant to receive Pfizer's mRNA COVID-19 vaccine.
4. New Zealanders have been able to book to receive AstraZeneca's vaccine since 26 November 2021. As of 15 December 2021, 2609 have received a dose of AstraZeneca's vaccine, with 2223 future bookings in place.
5. It is not yet known what impact access to AstraZeneca's vaccine will have on overall uptake, however early reporting indicates this has been a welcomed option for a small number of New Zealanders, some of which may be impacted by Vaccination Orders and workplace vaccination requirements under the COVID-19 Protection Framework.

Donation of AstraZeneca's vaccine

6. In late 2020, New Zealand secured access to 7.6 million doses of AstraZeneca's vaccine through an advance purchase agreement (APA) as part of our COVID-19 vaccine portfolio.
7. In July, AstraZeneca's vaccine was granted provisional consent by Medsafe for use in adults aged 18 and older.

8. In October, New Zealand donated 708,400 doses of AstraZeneca's vaccine secured through our APA to the COVAX Facility, where it was delivered to Indonesia and Samoa.
9. On 29 November 2021 Ministers agreed:
 - a. subject to absorptive capacity by COVAX, to donate 5.8 million doses of AstraZeneca's vaccine to the COVAX Facility for un-earmarked distribution in Q1 2022
 - b. the remaining 1 million doses secured under the APA should be reserved for potential future use.

Delivery schedule of Janssen's vaccine

10. On 29 November, Vaccine Ministers confirmed the approach to:
 - a. take receipt of 500,000 doses of Janssen's vaccine as a contingency
 - b. donate the remaining 1.5 million doses of Janssen's vaccine through the COVAX Facility, and to seek Gavi's agreement to earmark a portion of this supply to the Pacific region.

Ongoing Access to AstraZeneca's Vaccine

11. Current uptake of just under 5000 doses administered or booked indicates a low level of demand for AstraZeneca's vaccine. However, for those that have accessed AstraZeneca's vaccine as an alternative to Pfizer's mRNA vaccine, this is likely a valuable option - particularly for people impacted by Vaccination Orders or workplace vaccination requirements under the COVID-19 Protection Framework.
12. The 100,000 doses received in November have an expiry date of 2 April 2022. AstraZeneca has informed officials that it does not expect the expiry date for its current product to be extended.
13. As a result, there is a decision to be made regarding the ongoing utilisation of AstraZeneca's vaccine in conjunction with other vaccines in the portfolio for domestic use. There may be an ongoing need for AstraZeneca's vaccine to support initial uptake, complete second dose vaccinations, or to be considered as an alternative booster option (subject to Medsafe approval).
14. With the current supplies expiring 2 April, officials are working with AstraZeneca on how to enable access to further supplies from March. While the number of doses required has not yet been determined, it is expected to be smaller than 100,000 doses.
15. Beyond a delivery in March, the future need and accessibility of AstraZeneca's vaccine is unknown. At this stage, we will retain access to the 1 million doses if and when they are needed. There may be a point in time when other vaccines provide a superior alternative (for example Janssen or Novavax). There will be 500,000 doses of Janssen's single-dose vaccine available [REDACTED] s 9(2)(b)(ii) [REDACTED], subject to Medsafe approval. Officials will continue to provide advice as the context evolves.
16. [REDACTED] s 9(2)(b)(ii) [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
17. Officials will continue to provide advice on potential ongoing need for access to AstraZeneca's vaccine, and options for maintaining this access, if needed. Further advice will be provided in

early 2022 around securing further doses of AstraZeneca's vaccine prior to the expiry of the current 100,000 dose shipment.

Delivery of Janssen's vaccine

18. Officials are working closely with Janssen to manage the delivery and receipt of 500,000 doses of Janssen's single-dose vaccine, s 9(2)(b)(ii)
19. These doses will be transported at -20°C and stored at the same temperature upon arrival at Healthcare Logistics. At this temperature, Janssen's vaccine has a shelf life of 24 months and at this stage is intended for use as a contingency.
20. As noted above, there is a decision to be made regarding ongoing utilisation of vaccines in our portfolio for domestic use, and there may be a use case for Janssen's vaccine. At this stage, no decision is required and further advice will be provided in early 2022.

Donation of AstraZeneca and Janssen's vaccines to the COVAX Facility

21. As agreed on 29 November, officials are working with each of the vaccine suppliers and COVAX to facilitate the donation of 5.8 million doses of AstraZeneca's vaccine and 1.5 million doses of Janssen's vaccine to the COVAX Facility for un-earmarked distribution in Q1 2022.
22. It is expected a batch of 2.7 million doses of AstraZeneca's vaccine will be released for donation s 9(2)(b)(ii), another batch of 2.7 million doses s 9(2)(b)(ii), and the remaining amount (expected to be 400,000 doses) to be released s 9(2)(b)(ii).
23. Janssen's vaccine is expected to be released for donation s 9(2)(b)(ii), and all 1.5 million doses have been ear-marked for use in the Pacific region.
24. New Zealand already has a tripartite agreement in place with AstraZeneca and Gavi (COVAX's legal entity) from the previous donation in October. Officials are finalising an Offer Notice this week for COVAX and AstraZeneca's consideration, which will provide the basis for both parties to formally consent to this donation. Gavi will be able to invoice New Zealand for payment of ancillary costs to support administering the vaccines under the existing Ancillary Costs Grant Agreement.
25. COVAX has reported that they are facing challenges absorbing large volumes of AstraZeneca's vaccine available from now through to the end of January. Some Advance Market Commitment (AMC) countries have rejected donation offers this month due to absorptive capacity constraints and/or preference for vaccines that they are already rolling out. s 9(2)(b)(ii)
[REDACTED]
26. Currently, there is no agreement in place to donate Janssen's vaccines, however officials are close to finalising a tripartite agreement and an Offer Notice with Janssen and Gavi.

New Zealand's Participation in COVAX in 2022

27. In August 2022, Cabinet noted that officials would provide further advice to Vaccine Ministers on our ongoing engagement in the COVAX Facility as a self-financing participant [CAB-21-MIN-0350 refers].

28. In 2020, New Zealand signed up to the COVAX Facility to spread risk across a broader portfolio of vaccines. To date, COVAX has provided us timely access to a small volume of Pfizer's vaccine in June this year when domestic supply was scarce. We have otherwise declined or donated the volumes offered to us through COVAX as we had sufficient access via direct vaccine company supply agreements.
29. COVAX has since established a new model for participation in 2022 ("COVAX 2.0"), which includes:
- an updated contractual process for vaccine procurement
 - a non-procuring participation pathway for countries that do not wish to purchase through COVAX but would like to remain engaged in and support the initiative.
30. COVAX is currently supplying Sinovac, Sinopharm, AstraZeneca and Janssen vaccines under the new contract, and will include Novavax and Clover vaccines in supply offerings in early 2022. The new contracts are intended to simplify the purchasing process for participants, increase optionality and visibility of pipeline supply, and reduce financial risk to Gavi.
31. There is no deadline for signing up to the new procurement model. Officials judge there is limited value from a portfolio perspective in us signing up at this stage, although staying engaged allows us to opt in to the procurement pathway if it is in our best interest in future and this therefore manages the medium/long term risk.
32. **s 6(b)(i), s 9(2)(ba)(i)**
[Redacted text]
33. Officials will continue to engage in the non-procuring pathway in 2022 and will revert to Vaccine Ministers with more advice on the COVAX 2.0 procurement pathway as our portfolio needs or understanding of wider costs and benefits evolves.

Next steps

34. Officials will continue to progress work to manage ongoing access to AstraZeneca's vaccine and utilisation across the portfolio, implement donation to the COVAX Facility and assess the value of participating in COVAX 2.0 as a procuring country.
35. Further advice will be provided early in 2022.