



# Discovery Vaccination Programme

## Frequently Asked Questions

MAY 2021



## COVID-19 Vaccination Strategy

### What is South Africa's vaccination strategy?

The South Africa government has procured sufficient vaccines for the national vaccination programme, aiming to vaccinate 250 000 – 300 000 people per day at the peak of the programme after commencing the next phase of the rollout in May 2021, and targeting completion of the roll-out by February 2022. Vaccines will be administered in phases according to a national prioritisation framework, to ensure that those most vulnerable and at-risk in the South African population are vaccinated first:

- Phase 1 (currently underway) - healthcare workers
- Phase 2 (end of May 2021) – the elderly (over the age of 60 years) and other at-risk populations
- Phase 3 (October 2021) – remaining population

The private sector will assist Government to optimise vaccine rollout efficiency and speed and vaccines will be administered at both public and private vaccination centres throughout the country. Achieving this national vaccination target will require the combined efforts of both the public and private sector to fast-track vaccine administration in order to cover high-risk populations as quickly as possible, and thereafter the entire willing and eligible South African population.

### Has the South African government procured sufficient vaccines?

In his 11 January National Address, President Cyril Ramaphosa made it clear that South Africa, like countries the world over, was embarking on a massive COVID-19 vaccination programme. Since then, our Government has procured sufficient vaccines for the national vaccination programme and aims to vaccinate 41 million adults, by the end of 2021. To date, South Africa has secured 61 million doses of vaccine, consisting of 31 million J&J doses and 30 million Pfizer-BioNTech doses. And, in the near future we will also receive 1.2 million vaccines from COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access, Covax.

### How is Discovery supporting the national vaccine strategy?

Discovery has committed to significant financial and human capital investment into its vaccination programme in support of the Government's objectives and national vaccine rollout plan. We have been working with Business for South Africa and the National Department of Health (NDoH) to ensure that capacity is in place and have developed a comprehensive strategy to support the national rollout plan. Over the course of 2021, our aim is to vaccinate over three million adult Discovery clients quickly and efficiently, setting up vaccination sites and working alongside provider partners to create capacity to vaccinate 40 000 people per day.

## Discovery's vaccination programme

### How will clients be prioritised?

There are just over 3 million Discovery clients over the age of 18 who are eligible for the vaccination. We have segmented these clients by age, and vaccines will be administered according to an age-based prioritisation network as guided by the Ministerial Advisory Committee. This is called the "national prioritisation framework" to ensure that those most vulnerable and at-risk are vaccinated first. In accordance with national prioritisation framework and depending on availability of supply of vaccines, we estimate the following broad timelines. The timelines indicate may be subject to change given

1. Clients aged 60+: expected to be vaccinated from May or June onward, with those over the age of 80 years likely to commence in May, pending supply of vaccines: 576 000 lives
2. Clients between the ages of 40-60 with chronic conditions and co-morbidities: from July or August onwards: 474 000 lives
3. Clients aged 40-60: expected to be vaccinated from July or August onwards, pending supply of vaccines: 1.1m lives
4. Clients aged 18+: expected to be vaccinated from September or October onwards: 1.4m lives

### Who is included in the definition of Discovery clients?

Discovery clients are active policy holders and beneficiaries of any Discovery products including inter alia PrimaryCare, (FlexiCare), Bank, Life, Invest, Insure and/or Group Risk products including Healthy Company and Prepaid Health as well as registered members or dependants of all the medical schemes as administered by Discovery Health (Pty) Ltd (Discovery Health Medical Scheme and restricted membership medical schemes)

### What sites are included in the Discovery vaccination site and partner provider network?

#### Discovery vaccination sites

Discovery is contributing through the development of approximately 25 large vaccination sites that will be added to the national vaccination network. These sites are designed and strategically located to maximise throughput and deliver up to 25 000 vaccinations per day when running at full capacity. These large sites include specific Virgin Actives sites, certain Discovery office locations and dedicated mass vaccination site/s.

#### Partner provider network

In addition to large vaccination sites, Discovery's network of pharmacies; GP practices and hospitals is designed to delivery up to a further 15 000 doses per day when running at full capacity.

### Are these sites exclusive to Discovery clients only?

These sites are not exclusive to Discovery clients; all Discovery vaccination sites are open to every person in South Africa who has registered and obtained a valid vaccination code from the government's [Electronic Vaccination Data System \(EVDS\)](#).

### **When will these sites be open and operational?**

Discovery has planned a site roll-out strategy that will kick off in the latter part of May 2021 and will ramp-up over the coming months. The aim is to open new vaccination sites in different provinces every week, over a 2-month period, to the point where approximately 25 sites will be fully operational by July 2021. This ramp-up strategy is dependent on and will flex according to population demand and supply of vaccines. At full capacity, these sites will contribute 25 000 vaccinations a day to the national vaccination target.

### **How did Discovery select its vaccination sites?**

Discovery's focus is on ensuring that its clients have sufficient access to vaccination sites across South Africa. To this end, a rigorous geo-mapping exercise was followed, taking into account both the Discovery client base and broader South African population. This approach has ensured that the selected vaccination sites are located within reasonable access for the targeted population of clients. Based on the geo-locations of the Discovery vaccination sites, 72% of DSY clients will be within a 20km radius, which increases to 93% when including larger pharmacy, hospital and other provider partners. Gaps in coverage will be closed by targeted provider contracting within these areas.

### **Is Discovery purchasing the vaccines for its members?**

COVID-19 vaccine procurement has been centralised and coordinated by the NDoH to ensure that the vaccine roll-out addresses the country's objectives. Discovery has been extensively involved in the B4SA vaccine support project, working alongside colleagues in the NDoH to ensure that there is a co-ordinated approach to establishing vaccination sites, taking due cognisance of the centralised procurement and distribution mechanisms.

### **Can you choose which vaccine you would prefer?**

There aren't mechanisms in place nationally or worldwide for people to pre-select their vaccine of choice. Given the limited supply of and demand for vaccines globally, it is advisable that people get vaccinated with the vaccine that is made available at the time. All approved vaccines have met the required clinical efficacy standards.

## **End-to-end vaccination journey**

We have created a seamless vaccination process to support you at every step of your vaccination journey.

1. Pre-vaccination
2. Vaccination
3. Post-vaccination

## 1. PRE-VACCINATION: REGISTRATION

### What is the process to register for my vaccine?

1. Receive your personalised invitation: Discovery has sent personal invitations to all eligible clients over the age of 60 years and those members with chronic conditions and co-morbidities. Thereafter, invitations to clients between the ages of 40 – 60 years will follow, with the remainder of the population to follow such that all eligible Discovery clients will be invited by June.
2. Register on the Electronic Vaccination Data System: Online registration on the EVDS is a requirement of the National Department of Health for all South Africans. Registration on the EVDS provides each person with a unique vaccination code that you will need to present on the day of your scheduled vaccination. The EVDS registration process is managed by the National Department of Health and can be accessed [here](#).
3. Register on the Discovery Vaccination Portal: Discovery has developed a dedicated digital portal on Connected Care, called the [Discovery COVID-19 Vaccination Portal](#). This is a centralised web-based platform to assist you with important aspects of the vaccination programme. It will work alongside and in support of the National Department of Health's National Electronic Vaccine Distribution System (EVDS) and will allow for several functions including personalized pre-vaccination communication making sure you are fully prepared for your vaccination day, patient identification on site, reminders for second-vaccination doses, and follow-up including post-vaccination assessments where you can log any side effects you may experience.

### How will the Discovery Vaccination Portal help me?

The Discovery Vaccination Portal will give you access to an extensive set of features and functionality to guide you through your COVID-19 vaccination journey, including help with:

1. Understanding where you fit within the national prioritisation framework
2. Receiving reminders for your second dose (if you received a two-dose vaccine)
3. Knowing what to expect and how to prepare for your COVID-19 vaccination
4. Receiving your digital COVID-19 vaccination card, which is your proof of vaccination.

### Why do I have to register on both EVDS and the Discovery Vaccination Portal?

By registering on EVDS you will automatically be allocated a place in the virtual queue for your vaccination. The queue is based mainly on age, where the elderly are scheduled first. The queue is not determined on a first-come / first-served basis, but on the national prioritisation framework. You must, register on the EVDS system to secure your place in the queue and to receive your unique vaccination code that you will be required to present on the day of your scheduled vaccination.

In addition to registering on EVDS, Discovery has developed a seamless digital vaccination experience for its clients which is unlocked when you register on Discovery's Vaccination Portal through Connected Care. This works alongside and in support of the Department of Health's National Electronic Vaccine

Distribution System (EVDS), which will provide tailored journey, guidance and support for receiving their vaccinations.

### **What information is required to register on the Discovery Vaccination Portal?**

We have developed a simple 5-step process:

1. Log into the Discovery app or Discovery website using your Discovery Digital ID username and password and click on <insert path / link to navigation>. If you haven't yet downloaded the Discovery app, now's the time to do so.
2. Select which people are registering for the vaccine: Clients can register on behalf of anyone over the age of 18 years on the same policy
3. Confirm personal details: e.g. Contact details, physical address where you're most likely to stay when you're vaccinated
4. Confirm medical details: e.g. Medical aid details, are you pregnant, do you have any chronic conditions etc
5. Click submit and receive your reference number as confirmation of your registration with Discovery. You may then log on to your Discovery COVID-19 Vaccination Portal at any time on Connected Care, to monitor and manage your vaccination journey in one place.

### **Will my details auto-populate when I login to the system?**

All demographic information will be pre-populated on the system. There is currently no pre-population of medical information. We are requesting all clients to complete the relevant fields during the registration process so that we get the most recent information available. Where clients indicate that they have a chronic condition, they may be asked to provide proof of their medical condition from a registered healthcare professional. This may include a valid medication script from the treating doctor, not more than 6 months old.

### **Who can register on the Discovery Vaccination Portal?**

All Discovery clients over the age of 18, have access to and can register on the Discovery COVID-19 Vaccination Portal, using their current Discovery Digital ID username and password.

### **How do I access the Discovery Vaccination Portal?**

You can access [Discovery's COVID-19 Vaccination Portal](#) on the Connected Care platform. This is available on the Discovery website through our vaccination information hub or the Discovery app under the Managing COVID-19 menu item.

### **How do clients without access to a smart phone or computer register on the Vaccination Portal?**

Clients can call the Discovery call centre where a call centre agent will assist with the registration process, or alternatively make use of the [WhatsApp service](#) channel.

### **Will Discovery clients be prioritised over the general South African public?**

This process does not give preference or priority to Discovery clients over non-clients. Discovery is fully aligned to and in support of the national prioritization framework, which will be strictly adhered to. This means that a non-client may be vaccinated before a Discovery client if they've been prioritised through the national prioritization framework.

### **Can Discovery clients select a preferred site and book a time?**

Currently during Phase 2 of the national vaccine rollout process, the EVDS system will automatically assign a vaccination site based on proximity to your home address that you entered as part of your EVDS registration. You will receive an SMS from EVDS notifying you of your allocation. This is where you would need to go for your vaccination.

### **What support is available to me during this process?**

Discovery has established a number of digital, self-servicing channels and platforms to support you in registering for and getting the COVID-19 vaccine. Our COVID-19 Vaccination Portal in Connected Care will guide you through every step and make sure you access a seamless vaccination journey. You can also visit this page at any time for up-to-date information or access our [WhatsApp service](#) to get instant answers to your COVID-19 questions, anywhere, anytime.

## **2. [VACCINATION: THE DISCOVERY ONSITE EXPERIENCE](#)**

### **What do I need to take with me on the day I am vaccinated at a Discovery site?**

Please bring your valid vaccination code SMS, proof of appointment and proof of ID and wear a mask. If you are a member of a medical scheme, please also bring your medical scheme membership card.

### **When I arrive at a Discovery site, what is the process for getting my vaccination?**

Please follow the directional signage posted throughout the site. The vaccination process is as follows:

1. Arrival and COVID-19 pre-screening: When you arrive at the Discovery vaccination site you will have your temperature and documentation checked. You must have a temperature at or below 37.4°C, and unique vaccination code from EVDS, booking and proof of ID to be vaccinated. Without this information, you cannot enter the vaccination site.
2. Registration: To register for the vaccine, produce your ID, medical aid membership card, booking and unique vaccination code issued by EVDS via SMS.
3. Claim: A claim will be submitted electronically to your medical scheme. If you do not have medical scheme cover a claim will be submitted to the NDoH. No-one is required to pay for the vaccination on the day.
4. Waiting area: You will proceed to the waiting area and will be notified when it's your turn.

5. **Vaccination:** You will move to a vaccination station. The vaccinator is required to ask you a series of medical questions and requests informed consent. The vaccinator then administers the vaccine, and logs the vaccine details on the system.
6. **Certification:** The vaccinator completes a proof-of-vaccination card for you to take home. This card is either physical (paper) and/or digital, which the system will generate for Discovery clients and make available through the Discovery App and our other member platforms
7. **Observation:** Clients wait under clinical observation for a minimum of 15 minutes. Some clients may be required to wait for 30 minutes if the vaccinator determines they are at risk for an allergic reaction. After their mandated observation period, the observation assistant will let the client know when they can leave.

### **Who will administer my vaccine?**

Current regulation only allows for medical practitioners whose current scope of practice includes administering injections, to administer the COVID-19 vaccine. For example, dentists, paramedics, registered nurses, enrolled nurses and doctors. All vaccinators at Discovery vaccination sites will be fully trained and accredited healthcare professionals and will have completed all required vaccinator training. There will also be dedicated medical support onsite should you require any additional assistance.

### **How many vaccines will I need?**

This depends on the type of vaccine administered as your first dose. Some vaccinations, like Pfizer-BioNTech, need two shots to provoke a stronger immune response. Others, like Johnson & Johnson, currently only need one dose for a similar effect. Our team on site will tell you which vaccine you are getting and whether you need to come back for your second dose.

### **If I require a second dose, what process do I follow to get the second dose?**

You need to ensure that you get your second dose as soon as possible after at least 21 days. You should not wait more than 42 days to get your second dose, otherwise you may be reducing your vaccine's efficacy. You will be logged on the system as receiving the first of a two dose vaccine if applicable. When you leave the vaccination site, you will be reminded when you need to have your second dose by via a reminder card you will be given at the site

### **What clinical guidelines will the medical staff be using?**

The vaccinators on all Discovery sites have undergone extensive training on the prescribed clinical guidelines required to be adhered to for safe administration of the COVID-19 vaccine. These include those of the National Department of Health, Discovery Health as well as the Centre for Disease Control ("CDC") international guidelines.

### **When should I not be vaccinated?**

Please delay your vaccination if:

- You do not feel unwell or have a temperature above 37.5°C
- You do not currently have COVID-19
- You are not in the 10-day COVID-19 recovery period
- You have not been in hospital with COVID-19 in the last 28 days
- You have not received any other vaccination in the last 14 days

Follow the medical advice you have been given if:

- You have been advised by a medical doctor not to get vaccinated
- You had a severe or immediate allergic reaction (within four hours) to your first dose of COVID-19 vaccine

### **What happens after my vaccination?**

The medical staff will complete your vaccination card for you to take home and you will then move to the observation area. In this observation area, you will be monitored for a minimum of 15 minutes. We will let you know if you need to stay longer, and you will be told when your observation time is over and you are able to leave the vaccination site.

### **Will I get a bad reaction?**

After you have had your vaccination, common effects that show the vaccine is working include mild pain and swelling at the injection site and occasionally, fever, headache, chills, tiredness, headaches, muscle pain and nausea. Very rare side effects include anaphylaxis and blood clots.

### **When am I fully vaccinated?**

It takes time for your body to build protection after the vaccine. People are considered fully vaccinated two weeks after their last shot of the COVID-19 vaccine. COVID-19 vaccines are highly effective; but none provide 100% protection. This means a very small number of people might become infected after being fully vaccinated, but these infections are rare and typically mild or symptom-free. Even after you've been fully vaccinated against COVID-19, you should keep taking precautions in public places like wearing a mask, staying 2 meters apart from others, avoiding crowds and poorly ventilated spaces, and washing your hands often.

### **Do I need to submit a claim to my medical aid?**

Your claim will be submitted to your medical scheme electronically on your behalf as part of the vaccination process. Please ensure that you bring your membership card with you.

### **Is there emergency medical personnel and support onsite?**

There are onsite medical and emergency services and equipment at all Discovery sites, including the vaccination sites at Virgin Active run by Discovery.

**How can you provide feedback on your vaccination experience?**

You will be prompted to give your feedback via our post-vaccination assessment on the Connected Care platform.

**Will the sites cater for the elderly or reduced mobility?**

All Discovery sites will cater for those with reduced mobility – wheelchair access, lifts, larger access gates, wide corridors and spaces to manoeuvre.

### **3. POST-VACCINATION: TAILORED COMMUNICATION**

**What is the process after having my vaccination?**

If you require a second vaccine dose, you will receive a SMS reminder for your second vaccination appointment. You will also receive confirmation of your vaccine including a link to a post vaccination questionnaire to capture your vaccination outcomes. Any clients who report adverse reactions are referred to a healthcare professional. You will also be notified once your digital vaccine card is ready.

## **Vaccination funding**

**How will the vaccination for funded for medical scheme members?**

The Council for Medical Schemes (CMS) has declared funding for the COVID-19 vaccine to be a Prescribed Minimum Benefit. Medical schemes are therefore obliged to fund the COVID-19 vaccine as a Prescribed Minimum Benefit to every member of the respective scheme in line with South Africa's vaccine prioritisation guidelines. Discovery Health Medical Scheme has ring-fenced funding for all members of the Scheme to receive the COVID-19 vaccine.

**How will the vaccination at a Discovery vaccination site be funded for individuals who are not covered on a medical scheme?**

Vaccinations will be free of charge for all eligible South Africans across both the private and public health sectors. If you are uninsured and have been allocated by EVDS to Discovery vaccination site, your vaccination will be funded by the National Department of Health. To be eligible for National Department of Health funding of your vaccination at Discovery vaccination site, or any other private vaccination site, you will be required to provide a valid unique vaccination code from EVDS and verify that you have been allocated to that particular vaccination site by EVDS

**For additional information, please refer to the [FAQ](#) on the Discovery COVID-19 Information Hub**