

MINUTES: COVID-19 Vaccine Technical Advisory Group

Date: Tuesday 20 July 2021

Time: 11:00am to 12:00pm

Location: [REDACTED] Out of Scope [REDACTED]

Chair: Ian Town

Members: David Murdoch, Elizabeth Wilson, Ian Frazer, Nikki Turner, Peter McIntyre, Pippa Scott, Sean Hanna, Sue Crengle, Tony Walls

Ministry of Health Attendees: Caroline McElnay, Daniel Bernal, Edwin Reynolds, Fiona Callaghan, Brooke Hollingshead

Guests: Bryan Mitchelson, Janelle Duncan

Apologies: Andi Shirtcliffe, James Ussher, Shayma Faircloth, Helen Petousis-Harris, Nikki Moreland, Juliet Rumball-Smith, Niki Stefanogiannis, Chris James, Derek Fitzgerald, Susan Kenyon

1.0	Welcome and previous minutes Ian Town welcomed all Members Attendees and Guests in his capacity as Chair of the COVID-19 Vaccine Technical Advisory Group (CV TAG). Minutes of the last meeting (13 July 2021) were accepted.
2.0	Science Updates Updates on the COVID-19 vaccines were highlighted: - The US Food and Drug Administration and European Medicines Agency have added warnings to the vaccine data sheets for Janssen and AstraZeneca on Guillain-Barré syndrome. - Evidence on single dose effectiveness was added to the science updates. - It was noted that Pfizer is trialling lower doses among young people aged under 12.
3.0	Research in Children This item was not discussed.
4.0	Vaccine Rollout The daily vaccine report was presented to CV TAG. The rollout is proceeding at pace, and larger deliveries of Pfizer are expected each month. The Ministry is on track to move into the next round of invitations (Group 4 from 28th July).
5.0	Myocarditis Recommendations Update

	• A Medsafe alert on myocarditis will be published later this week. The draft communication was shared with CV TAG, and feedback will be collated by the Secretariat to share back to Medsafe. • CV TAG discussed the background rates of myocarditis, and rates post-Pfizer vaccination, internationally and in Aotearoa New Zealand. ○ It was agreed that the US rates provided the best available baseline for comparisons with Aotearoa New Zealand. ○ The US data is broken down further by gender, age group and follow-up time, and notes a risk of 1 in 25,000 for males aged 12-29 within 7 days of the second dose, and 1 in 238,000 for females aged 12-29 within 7 days of the second dose, for mRNA vaccines. ○ Severity measures should also be incorporated into the presentation of the data, for example hospitalisation and/or ICU admission rates, if data are available. • Draft recommendations on the risk of myocarditis after Pfizer vaccination were discussed. ○ CV TAG noted that there is some evidence that young people aged 16 to 29 years have a strong immune response after one dose, however that two doses provide the best protection. A delayed schedule for the second dose was discussed. Whether this potentially reduces the risk of myocarditis, in addition to the severity of other adverse events, is unknown. ○ CV TAG recommended that for people aged 16 to 29 years the second dose be administered at least 8 weeks after the first. ○ It was noted that this would have practical implications for the booking system, planning mass vaccination events, and public risk communications. • A memo with these recommendations will be updated and provided to the Director-General and CVIP.
6.0	Children Priority Groups • Draft recommendations for potential priority groups among children were shared with the group, to inform the Decision to Use for 12- to 15-year-olds • Priority groups overseas have included children who are about to undergo long-term immunosuppression, immunocompromised, in long-term residential care, requiring transplants or who have neurologic disabilities or gastrointestinal (multi-system medically vulnerable) conditions. Risk factors for COVID-19 such as obesity, respiratory disease, and ethnicity should also be taken into account. • CV TAG noted that the New Zealand's lack of community transmission was an important consideration for now, and vaccinating adults was the priority at this time. • STA will revise draft recommendations and share with CV TAG.
7.0	Next Steps/Decisions Pending None.
8.0	Any Other Business It was noted that Janssen could be an option for people with severe disabilities who find vaccination difficult, and therefore this group should be added to the 'Decision to Use Janssen' memo.
9.0	Agenda items for next meeting MMR and flu vaccine scheduling and co-administration was discussed. The STA are currently drafting advice on this for CV TAG's consideration, and it is scheduled for discussion at CV TAG's meeting on Tuesday 3 August.

10.0	New Action Items Raised During Meeting			
	#	Agenda item	Actions	Action Owner
	33	Myocarditis after Pfizer Vaccination	Update message for Ministry of Health Comms on the risks of myocarditis.	Secretariat
	34	Myocarditis after Pfizer Vaccination	Compile information on cardiac-related events associated with other vaccines in New Zealand's portfolio.	Secretariat
	35	Science Updates	Compile and monitor updates on reduced Pfizer doses among children	Secretariat
	36	Myocarditis after Pfizer Vaccination	Collate feedback on Medsafe's Myocarditis alert communication	Secretariat
	37	Children priority groups	Update recommendations on children priority groups	Secretariat
	38	Decision to Use Janssen	Add people with severe disabilities who find vaccination difficult as a priority group for Janssen	Secretariat
Meeting closed at 12:00 pm				
Next meeting: Tuesday 27 July – 11:00am to 12:00pm				

Open Actions:

#	Agenda item	Actions	Action Owner	Updates
33	Myocarditis after Pfizer Vaccination	Update message for Ministry of Health Comms on the risks of myocarditis.	Secretariat	13/07 - Action raised 16/07 - Message updated and awaiting sign-off
34	Myocarditis after Pfizer Vaccination	Compile information on cardiac-related events associated with other vaccines in New Zealand's portfolio.	Secretariat	13/07 - Action raised
35	Science Updates	Compile and monitor updates on reduced Pfizer doses among children	Secretariat	20/07 – Action raised
36	Myocarditis after Pfizer Vaccination	Collate feedback on Medsafe's Myocarditis alert communication	Secretariat	20/07 – Action raised
37	Children priority groups	Update recommendations on children priority groups	Secretariat	20/07 - Action raised

38	Decision to Use Janssen	Add people with severe disabilities who find vaccination difficult as a priority group for Janssen	Secretariat	20/07 - Action raised
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Closed Actions Since Last Meeting:

#	Agenda item	Actions	Action Owner	Updates
29	Myocarditis after Pfizer Vaccination	Draft message for Ministry of Health Comms on the risks of myocarditis.	Secretariat	29/06 - Action raised 30/06 - Message signed off and sent to Comms
30	Myocarditis after Pfizer Vaccination	Convene a subgroup of CV TAG to advise on the risk of myocarditis.	Secretariat	29/06 - Action raised 30/06 - Subgroup convened and provided advice
31	Myocarditis after Pfizer Vaccination	Request data from CVIP on numbers <30 in each group.	Secretariat	29/06 - Action raised 01/07 - Data received and incorporated into request for advice on myocarditis
32	Myocarditis after Pfizer Vaccination	Request behavioural insights information on vaccine hesitancy among <30	Secretariat	29/06 - Action raised 01/07 - Data received and incorporated into request for advice on myocarditis