



OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER
HON MARK BROWN
GOVERNMENT OF THE COOK ISLANDS

COOK ISLANDS VACCINATION ROLL-OUT TO COMMENCE 18TH MAY
MEDIA RELEASE – 12TH MAY 2021

Prime Minister Mark Brown today announced that the COVID-19 vaccination roll-out will commence from Tuesday 18th May 2021.

“With the support of the New Zealand Government, we have managed to provide the Cook Islands with sufficient Pfizer vaccine to provide full coverage for all our eligible population” he said.

“On behalf of the Government and people of the Cook Islands, I extend to Prime Minister Ardern, the Government and people of New Zealand our heartfelt gratitude for provision of the Pfizer vaccine which arrives Rarotonga next week.”

“On February 10th this year, the New Zealand Government approved Pfizer as the primary vaccine provider for the New Zealand population. This decision was based on the fact the Pfizer vaccine has been shown to be about 95% effective at preventing symptomatic infection.

“Our Cabinet approved the Pfizer vaccine for our people on March 17th – for the same reasons as New Zealand. The selection of Pfizer means our people, together with all New Zealanders will be able to access the same vaccines.

All residents in the Cook Islands over the age of 16 years are eligible for vaccination. No one will miss out.

Led by Te Marae Ora – Ministry of Health, the Cook Islands Government has over a number of months worked closely with New Zealand Ministry of Health officials to develop the Cook Islands vaccination roll-out programme.

New Zealand support includes technical advice, vaccine logistics planning and support and vaccinator workforce training. It also includes supply of consumables such as syringes and transportation of vaccines.

“Te Marae Ora is finalising roll-out plans that will see our vaccinations get underway from Tuesday 18th May, starting with frontline health staff and border workers, then, hotel staff, before we begin with the general public shortly after. We will be leading the way by asking our MP’s and House of Ariki to be vaccinated as an example to our people.”

“I urge our people to stay informed as Te Marae Ora and our Border Easement Taskforce provide further information on the vaccine rollout.”

“Vaccine information including registration and vaccination processes, dates for Rarotonga and pa enua roll out and other pertinent information will continue to be provided by Te Marae Ora officials and our fantastic Kia Orana Aunties in the coming days, so stay informed.”

“Vaccination is not mandatory.”

“However, I urge all of our people, all of our residents, to be vaccinated. It is free. It is safe. It will save lives. It could save your life and the lives of your loved ones.”

“No one and no country is immune to the devastating effects of COVID-19. Let us continue to work together to lift the protection of our people against COVID-19 through our whole of nation vaccination programme,” the Prime Minister concluded.

ENDS: Enquiries to Jaewynn McKay, +682 55486