

Vaccinations for ages 12-17 years old has opened

From On 20 October registration for young people aged 12 to 17 years old to get vaccinated with the Pfizer vaccine, without the consent of their parents or guardians, opened.



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This is in line with recommendations from the Ministerial Advisory Committee on Vaccines and follows the announcement made by Minister Health Dr Joe Phaahla last week.

With most of this age group at secondary or high school level, this will be beneficial as schools are preparing for end year examinations to conclude the academic year.

“Due to preparations for final year examinations, there won’t be any special vaccination sites at schools for this age group now,” says the Department of Health.

The department encourages parents, caregivers and legal guardians to assist eligible young people to register and vaccinate at their public or private nearest vaccination site.

No consent needed

The Children’s Act 38 of 2005 provides that children over the age of 12 years can consent to their own medical treatment or that of their children, provided they are of sufficient maturity and have the mental capacity to understand the benefits, risks, social and other implications of the treatment.

However, the department recommends that parents have open discussions with children about the benefits of Covid-19 vaccine to make an informed health choice, and possibly accompany them when they present themselves at vaccination sites.

Vaccination of young people from the age of 12 years is a global phenomenon of which the parents should not be too concerned about it.

Vikash Singh, Clicks managing executive agrees.

“Research has shown that vaccines are safe and effective and I urge parents to use this opportunity to discuss the benefits of vaccination with their children.”

“This cohort will add another six million eligible people to the vaccination pool, which is imperative if we want to avoid another hard lockdown and lessen the impact of a fourth wave in December,” says Singh.

Avoiding another lockdown

Clicks has administered almost 1,5 million jabs out of the 20 million vaccinations administered across the public and private sectors in South Africa.

During the recent VOOMA vaccination weekend, Clicks administered 17,254 vaccinations across 500 sites, but has seen a significant slowdown in vaccinations since.

Singh attributed this to vaccine hesitancy and misinformation.

“With less than 30% of the adult population vaccinated, we need to do everything we can to protect our vulnerable populations who are most at risk, such as the elderly and those with co-morbidities,” he says.

“Last year we could not safely visit our grandparents and loved ones over the festive season due to the pandemic. Let’s make this year different, and help build a healthier future for all,” Singh adds.

As with adults, all eligible children should bring along South African ID cards, Birth certificate with registration number, foreign passport or any verifiable asylum/refugee proof of identity bearing the name of the child for purposes of registering on the EVDS.

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