

## KEY MESSAGES

### Briefing with media on COVID-19 vaccination



- 1. Vaccines against COVID-19 are effective; they have saved tens of thousands of lives around the world already. Take the first available vaccine offered to you.**
  - Current evidence suggests that available vaccines that have been emergency use listed by WHO or approved by the Thai FDA are very effective in preventing serious illness and death from COVID-19, including variants
- 2. The vaccines that will be used in the national roll out in Thailand work. These will prevent people from getting very sick or dying from COVID-19.**
  - Millions of doses of AstraZeneca and Sinovac have been given around the globe
  - WHO recommends AstraZeneca and Sinovac for adults 18 years and above, including older people.
  - The risk of serious illness or death from COVID-19 are much higher than any serious side effect reported with vaccines
- 3. WHO strongly supports Thailand's plan to vaccinate 50 million people by the end of the year.**
  - Vaccinating as many people as possible in Thailand while maintaining other public health measures is the best strategy for ending the pandemic in this country
  - This vaccination campaign is the best hope for an improved economy (including tourism) and a return to pre-COVID-19 work and schooling.
  - Mass vaccination will reduce current and future risk from variants
- 4. WHO recommends that all eligible people living in Thailand should get vaccinated against COVID-19 as soon as it is offered.**
  - Around the world, we see that the more people are vaccinated, the less COVID-19 there is – vaccines work
  - The virus causing COVID-19 does not distinguish between nationalities and ethnicities
  - Vaccination will protect you against serious illness or death from COVID-19
  - The faster the RTG can vaccinate as many people in Thailand as possible, the faster we will see COVID-19 cases and deaths decrease, and the faster lives will return close to pre-COVID-19 normal
- 5. First doses of vaccine should be prioritized for those most at risk of serious illness or death.**
  - Focus first vaccination on health care workers and on those >60 and with underlying co-morbid conditions
  - Preventing serious illness and deaths is the priority of public health
  - Prioritizing those most at risk is the surest way to guarantee that essential health services for all people in Thailand may continue
  - It is the quickest, most efficient way to control the outbreak and ensure economic and social recovery
- 6. It is important to remain flexible to changing vaccination plans and strategies.**
  - Current government plan to vaccinate the elderly and those with comorbidities is in line with global best practices. Yet changes to these plans may be needed based on evolving situation and acknowledging global shortage of vaccine in all countries.

- 7. Vaccination together with public health measures is the exit strategy from the pandemic. You can protect yourself against COVID-19 by washing hands regularly, wearing a mask, keeping at least 1m away from others at all times and avoiding poorly ventilated indoor spaces or crowds.**
- Even if you are vaccinated, continue following these measures to protect those around you who have not yet received the vaccine