



## MINISTRY OF HEALTH

### ***Guidelines for immunization service provision in the country during the COVID-19 pandemic***

Recognizing the challenges, the coronavirus pandemic poses to the healthcare system, the National Vaccines and Immunization Program would like to guide as follows:

Routine immunization sessions should be maintained as long as National COVID-19 response measures allow. Any disruption of immunization services, even for short periods, will result in an accumulation of susceptible individuals, and an increased likelihood of vaccine preventable disease (VPD) outbreaks. Such outbreaks may result in deaths and an increased burden on the health system that is already strained by the response to the COVID-19 outbreak.

However, there is need to make adjustments during this pandemic and mitigate negative effects as below:

1. Follow the existing guidelines on COVID-19 infection prevention measures during immunization sessions
2. Avoid crowding in waiting rooms through scheduling/ staggering of immunization visits in the day
3. Allocate ventilated areas and ensure social distancing for caretakers and children waiting for immunization. Dedicate separate specific rooms for sick visits, away from the well visits and immunization
4. Assess and triage immunization clients, their caregivers for acute respiratory symptoms and risk factors for COVID-19 first to minimize chances of exposure
5. Communicate clearly to the caregivers on COVID-19 measures and importance of social distancing and the rationale for inclusion of immunization as one of the priority health services during the COVID-19 pandemic
6. Enumerate cohorts of children who may have missed their vaccine doses and develop an action plan for catch-up vaccination.

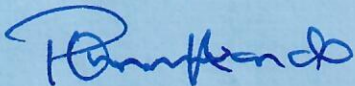


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7. Observe aseptic techniques during the immunization sessions and perform hand hygiene with alcohol-based hand rub before and after all patient contact, contact with potentially infectious material. Use soap and water if hands are visibly soiled.
8. Routine cleaning and disinfection procedures should be carried out as appropriate in immunization clinics
9. Counter stigma by learning and sharing facts.
10. Anticipate increased risk of coincidental AEFIs due to ongoing COVID-19 transmission coinciding with vaccination. Report and investigate ALL serious AEFIs as per existing protocols

For more information and updates on Coronavirus, Kindly call the MoH toll free number 719 or dial \*719#



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