



Ministry of Health

NATIONAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE COMMITTEE

ON CORONAVIRUS

UPDATE ON COVID-19 IN THE COUNTRY AND RESPONSE MEASURES, AS AT JUNE 20, 2022

DAY: 822

BRIEF NO: 812

PRESS STATEMENT

Good afternoon members of the Press and welcome to our briefing on the current status of COVID-19 in the country.

Fellow Kenyans, the Government through the Ministry of Health has been responding to the pandemic and has continuously updated and reviewed the COVID-19 containment measures ranging from quarantine, isolation, travel restrictions, restrictions on gatherings and enforcement of wearing of masks in public places.

The country has also been reviewing travel restrictions from different countries based on the guidance from the World Health Organization (WHO).

These reviews have been based on and guided by analysis of the prevailing epidemiological situation of the pandemic in the country and the region, whilst taking into account the situation in other jurisdictions. These restrictions enabled us to make great progress in controlling the pandemic.

You will recall that the Ministry revised the containment measures on 11th March, 2022, following a sustained decline in the number of COVID-19 cases by then.

We are now gathered here at a time when our country is facing a resurgence of COVID-19 cases. Over the last few weeks the country has witnessed a steady rise in the number of new cases and a slow rise in the overall positivity rate from a weekly

average of 0.6 % at the beginning of May 2022, to a weekly average of 10.74% in the week ending 19th June 2022.

This sharp rise in numbers of new infections should mean something to our country – that we must once again take urgent steps to prevent the slide into a crisis like the one we experienced in 2020 and 2021 when we lost many lives and resources.

Luckily, this increase in cases is so far not associated with increased hospitalizations with majority being managed under home based care and isolation.

We however, know that this steady increase in new infections is likely to get worse in view of the drop in temperatures occasioned by the current cold season. We expect a rise in the number of cases of respiratory diseases during this period. Indeed, three out of eight influenza surveillance sites namely Kakuma, KNH and Nakuru are reporting an increase

in the number of flu cases. We expect to have a lot more colds and flus with similar presentations like COVID-19. Therefore, there is a need for all those with respiratory like illnesses to seek appropriate medical care and be tested for COVID-19 to inform proper management.

The Ministry advises the public to take the following measures to reduce exposure and transmission of respiratory infections;

- Stay at home especially if you have a cold/flu-like symptoms
- Dress warmly to avoid triggers
- Avoid crowded places and gatherings
- Wear a mask in crowded and enclosed spaces
- Keep well hydrated
- Exercise regularly
- Maintain hands and body hygiene
- Seek medical advice or attention at an authorized treatment facility upon development

of difficulty in breathing and adhere to prescribed medication

- Eat a healthy balanced diet, lots of fruits and vegetables, with adequate portions of carbohydrates and protein

Ladies and gentleman,

With regard to vaccinations against COVID-19, the Ministry has far managed to Vaccinate as follows:

- a. Vaccination status above 18 years –
 - a. 8,578,026 Fully vaccinated
 - b. 2,463,559 partially vaccinated
 - c. 404,773 Booster doses administered
 - d. 31.5% is the proportion of adults fully vaccinated
- b. Vaccinations between 15-18 years –
 - a. 1,493,386 doses administered
 - b. 820,974 partially vaccinated
 - c. 340,259 fully vaccinated

Regrettably, the vaccination rate has dropped from over 300,000 doses per day in March 2022, to only about 12,000 vaccinations per day in May 2022, and yesterday, a paltry 4,817 people were vaccinated.

Although we have done well on the vaccination front, a large proportion of eligible Kenyans remain unvaccinated, while there is still a large stock of vaccines(3,495,940 doses) available in-country.

The Ministry has therefore launched an accelerated vaccination campaign to reach as more Kenyans as possible to stop the COVID-19 cases from rising.

The government through the Ministry of Health has sensitized the County Technical Teams on Vaccine management and health workers are well prepared to vaccinate all the eligible Kenyans. At the same time, we have trained Health Promotion and Community health teams and engaged communities

such as religious leaders, school management boards, transport sector and women and youth groups. Community mobilization and dialogues is ongoing in all counties.

We are determined to do everything to ensure all persons take advantage of this campaign to ensure that they are fully vaccinated for full protection in light of the surge of new infections in the country. In addition, fully vaccinated persons should take the booster dose of the COVID-19 vaccine 6 months after the last dose.

I thank the leadership of the Nairobi Metropolitan Services for becoming the first county to launch its Accelerated COVID-19 Vaccination Campaign on 2nd June 2022, in tandem with our national programme. I urge all counties to launch similar campaigns.

The Ministry is urging all National Government Agencies, County Governments, Faith Based

Organizations, and the Private Sector to ramp-up COVID-19 vaccination efforts across the country during the COVID-19 vaccination campaign scale-up, in a bid to ensure that we protect all Kenyans. Let no Kenyan suffer severe disease including hospitalization while vaccines are now available in our health facilities. COVID-19 vaccination remains the most effective intervention in the fight against this pandemic.

In addition to the accelerated vaccination campaign, the Government is also urging Kenyans to continue adhering to the public health and social measures as a personal responsibility. People are encouraged to ensure frequent hand washing and sanitization at all times. Let me reiterate the following:

1. With regard to wearing of face masks, the mandatory wearing of face mask in open public spaces where one is not in close proximity with another remains optional. However, one is required

to wear a mask when in contact with other people in closed/confined spaces such as in PSVs, Aircrafts, offices (Government/Private), supermarkets, market places and places of worship.

2. All in person indoor meetings to continue at full capacity of the venue as long as all the participants are fully vaccinated. All Attendees are required to wear a facemask at their meeting venues. All participants in in-person meetings are required to show proof of vaccination.

3. All in-person worship shall continue at full holding capacity as long as all the congregants and worshipers are fully vaccinated. Congregants are required to wear their face masks while inside the places of worship.

4. All international Travelers arriving into the country and who are fully vaccinated are exempted from the requirement of a PCR test and are exempted from quarantine upon arrival in the country.

5. All unvaccinated travelers arriving at any port of entry into Kenya are required to be in possession of a negative COVID-19 PCR test result conducted not more than 72 hours before departure regardless of the route of entry.

6. Unvaccinated travelers arriving at any point of entry will be subjected to rapid antigen test at their own cost. Any person who tests positive on antigen RDT is subjected to entry PCR test at their own further cost and self - isolate as per isolation guidelines.

7. All passenger service vehicles, train and domestic air flight services to continue operations at full conveyance capacity.

I am also urging County health departments to scale up their surveillance effort, and be on the look-out for any increase in cases presenting with flu-like symptoms and ensure they get tested for COVID-19. The Ministry has adequate rapid antigen test kits for distribution to all the counties. Counties are also

urged to revamp their isolation facilities and secure adequate supplies of PPEs and oxygen supplies as part of preparedness to manage the surge in cases.

I also make an appeal to the political class in this campaign period, to urge their supporters to get vaccinated against COVID-19 and to wear masks during the political rallies. Kenyans are urged to exercise personal responsibility while attending the rallies. Remember, your life matters.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to thank the media for continuously sensitizing Kenyans on the COVID-19 containment measures.

As I conclude, I would like to make a passionate appeal to Kenyans: Please join us in this campaign to ensure many people are vaccinated. This is the only way to protect ourselves, our families and the

community at large because the vaccines are safe,
effective and available.

I thank you all.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large, loopy 'M' followed by a long horizontal stroke that extends to the right.

**Sen Mutahi Kagwe, EGH,
CABINET SECRETARY.**