

**MEDIA RELEASE                                  COVID-19: PSA calls for mass vaccinations**

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The Public Servants Association (PSA), whilst welcoming the initiative to prioritise COVID-19 vaccinations for frontline workers, calls on Government to mass vaccinate all South Africans to alleviate multiple pressures on all sector of society.

The PSA, which represents some 240 000 public-sector employees, points out that despite prioritise frontline workers for vaccination, this will not prevent them from being over worked and even collapsing under current circumstances. Mass vaccination of all citizens will ease the pressure on healthcare facilities and health workers.

The pandemic has claimed the lives of many skilled workers across all sectors, which the fragile economy could ill afford. It will take time to replace the resulting skills shortage with a further negative impact on the stressed economy. The loss of lives owing to COVID-19 is not only impacting on the economy but is also depriving families of bread winners. Coupled with wide-spread retrenchments, increasing numbers of South Africans are faced with extreme poverty. It is therefore crucial for Government to ensure that as many citizens as possible are vaccinated as soon as possible to address the deepening humanitarian crisis.

The PSA furthermore warns Government not to repeat the mistakes that were made during the rollout of anti-retrovirals to the most vulnerable of society. The prevention of fraud and corruption must be actively pursued when the vaccine rollout commences. Persons who exploit the country during a crisis should be dealt with harshly to prevent opportunists from enriching themselves, as experienced during the procurement processes for COVID-19 personal protective equipment.

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