

Newsletter 29 January 2021

Vaccines at Last

It is a huge relief to see the daily number of new cases of Covid-19 in the Western Cape start to decline. The past few weeks have been extremely difficult for the hospital staff and critical care doctors across South Africa due to rising numbers of COVID-19 cases during our second wave peak.

Traveling to see family members over the [Christmas](#) and New Year period together with an increase in general socializing gave our new more infectious variant called 501Y.v2 the perfect environment to spread.

With this has come much grief, as many of us have buried loved ones and sadly, often more than one family member, colleagues and friends. I would like to extend my heartfelt condolences to you all.

The recent lockdown, with more people staying home, has certainly assisted in controlling the pandemic in the short term. Lockdown, curfews and alcohol prohibition are not economically sustainable in the long run, and it is important to also consider the rising number of people who are now unemployed, and those companies that have been forced into liquidation. The full impact of the coronavirus pandemic has not yet been fully appreciated.

The silver lining is the arrival of vaccines. This is the best news since [March 2020](#)! A huge decline in numbers of Covid-19 cases can be expected once sufficient numbers of the population have been inoculated. The severity of Covid-19 cases should also decline within a few weeks of rollout, which will make a major difference. At this stage we know that the first batch of vaccines will arrive on 1 February, but we do not know exactly when Phase II will be rolled out.

A summarized document from the Department of Health explaining everything you need to know about the SARS-CoV-2 vaccines coming to SA can be found in this letter, below the map. If you have any concerns, this should be a good read for you.

Take care, stay safe and remember that it is human behaviour that spreads this virus.

Yours in Health



Dr Louise Wigens