



**World Health
Organization**

WHO COVID-19 vaccines research

**How can vaccine research further contribute to
achieve the control of the pandemic everywhere?**

6 December 2021

13:00 – 19:00 Central European Time CET

Agenda



R&D Blueprint

Powering research
to prevent epidemics

In continuation to the scientific discussions on COVID-19 vaccines research, WHO R&D Blueprint in collaboration with CEPI and other COVAX partners is organizing a consultation to identify vaccine research priorities to facilitate further contributions of vaccines to achieve improved control of the pandemic everywhere.

During this forthcoming consultation global experts will review the available evidence, enumerate knowledge gaps, and outline research priorities in terms of:

- Our understanding of the dynamics of disease transmission and the potential contribution of COVID-19 vaccines and other measures to control the pandemic, including in the context of the omicron variant of concern
- Current evidence and considerations regarding the administration of additional doses
- Novel approaches for evaluation of COVID-19 vaccines, including in the context of the omicron variant of concern

Chairperson: Philip Krause

Time	Topic	Speakers
13:00 - 13:10	Welcome address	Soumya Swaminathan and Mike Ryan
13:10 - 13:20	Objectives of the meeting	Philip Krause
Session 1. Understanding the threat posed by the omicron variant and the current dynamics of disease transmission		
13:20 - 13:35	Overview of COVID-19 Epidemiology including the Omicron variant in South Africa	Cheryl Cohen
13:35 - 13:45	Increased risk of SARS-CoV-2 reinfection associated with emergence of the Omicron variant in South Africa	Juliet Pulliam
13:45 - 13:55	Global seroepidemiology: Natural immunity	Maria van Kerkhove
13:55 - 14:05	Global COVID-19 Epidemiology update	Boris Pavlin
14:05 - 14:15	Variants and vaccines: The TAG-COV, a WHO expert committee	Kanta Subbarao
14:15 - 14:45	<u>Panel discussion</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the current assessment of the threat posed by the omicron variant? Lessons learned from various control strategies What additional research on SARs-CoV2, including omicron, transmission dynamics is needed to guide PHSM and vaccination strategies? 	Panel Discussion moderated by Helen Rees Cheryl Cohen Anurag Agrawal Kanta Subbarao Maria van Kerkhove Phil Krause
Session 2. Updated evidence and considerations regarding variant-specific vaccines and administration of additional doses		
14:45 - 14:55	Observational evidence on vaccine effectiveness against the delta variant – latest results and risk of bias considerations	Julian Higgins
14:55 - 15:05	Understanding SARS-CoV2 long term immune memory	Rafi Ahmed
15:05 - 15:15	Immune responses post vaccination and their clinical relevance	Dan Barouch
15:15 - 15:25	Research priorities related to the omicron variant	César Muñoz-Fontela & William Dowling
15:25 - 15:35	Reference materials for analysis of vaccine serology response to VOCs	Mark Page
15:35 - 15:45	CMC considerations in authorizing use of variant-specific vaccines	Robin Levis
15:45 - 16:15	<u>Panel discussion</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How can the available evidence be applied to evaluation of vaccine effectiveness against new variants? Remaining knowledge gaps and research priorities How can we accelerate getting the needed information? What work needs to proceed at risk? 	Panel Discussion moderated by Marco Cavaleri Rafi Ahmed Julian Higgins César Muñoz-Fontela William Dowling Nicola Rose Robin Levis Marie-Christine Bielsky Chang-Joon Bae

Folake Olayinka

BREAK – 5 MINS

Session 3. Assuming a variant-specific vaccine is needed and developed, what are the challenges and, how should we facilitate this process?

16:20-16:40	Introduction to the session Anticipated challenges	Stanley Plotkin Florian Krammer TBC
16:40-17:15	<u>Panel discussion</u> Plans and challenges to develop and assess variant-specific vaccines	Panel discussion Stanley Plotkin Anne von Gottberg Florian Krammer TBC Marie-Christine Bielsky Hanna Nohynek Developers representatives

Session 4. Approaches for evaluation of COVID-19 vaccines effectiveness

17:15 – 17:25	WHO Target Product Profile for COVID Vaccines: current considerations	Ana María Henao-Restrepo
17:25 – 17:35	Overview of various global efforts towards the identification of a protective level	Peter Dull
17:35 – 17:45	Immunobridging to evaluate vaccines (different doses and target populations)	Doran Fink
17:45 – 17:55	Defined thresholds versus ranges of immune responses: can then be used to evaluate new vaccines?	Dean Smith
17:55 – 18:05	Trial designs to evaluate additional vaccines	Richard Peto
18:05 – 18:35	<u>Panel Discussion</u> What are the considerations for assessing variant-specific vaccines, as boosters and as primary vaccines? In a public health emergency, how could evaluation of a variant-specific vaccine be accelerated? What information could be extrapolated from existing experience with other COVID antigens? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Preliminary conclusions on the available evidence ○ Remaining knowledge gaps 	Panel Discussion moderated by Philip Krause Peter Dull Doran Fink Dean Smith Miles Davenport Richard Peto Peter Figueroa Thomas Fleming Arash Rashidian Narendra Arora
18:35 – 18:45	Overall conclusions, knowledge gaps and research priorities	Philip Krause
18:45 – 19:00	Next steps	WHO
19:00	END OF MEETING	