



PRESS RELEASE

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Practice run completed at the COVID-19 vaccination centre and GHA ahead of vaccinating members of the public

In preparation for the opening of the Gibraltar COVID-19 vaccination centre in the former PCC at the ICC, a full scale practice has been undertaken.

Fourteen clinical vaccinators, senior nurses, GPs, Pharmacists, administrative staff, security staff and a number of volunteers acting as ushers were all on hand to test out all the systems before the centre opens on Monday morning.

The whole system was tested from beginning to end including removing a day's supply of "dummy" vaccines from the ultra-cold freezer at St Bernard's Hospital and transporting these under Police escort to the centre a minimum of three hours before use.

At the vaccination centre, a number of student nurses were asked to role-play people going through the whole vaccination process including checking in, consent, clinical questioning, and simulation of actual vaccinations over three full appointment cycles (42 appointments). A range of scenarios were tested including some of the "patients" feeling unwell to ensure that staff were able to respond in the best possible way.

The Minister for Health and Care, Hon Samantha Sacramento MP said: "Now that we have many thousands of doses of COVID-19 vaccine in the GHA freezers in Gibraltar, I want to ensure that our priority groups of ERS residents and staff, GHA front line staff and in-patients, and our oldest residents along with some of the more clinically vulnerable people are vaccinated safely but also as quickly as possible. Vaccines in the freezer do not protect anyone. Therefore, our large-scale vaccination programme starts today in ERS and the GHA, with the public vaccination centre opening with appointments for some of our oldest and most vulnerable people on Monday. As we are intending to vaccinate many hundreds of people per day through this centre I was really keen that a full-scale test was undertaken to ensure everything ran according to plan. The testing proved to be very successful with some key points identified where we can improve our process".

Suzanne Romero, senior clinical lead for the public vaccination centre said "I would like to thank all our staff and volunteers as well as the student nurses who came to help out with our practice runs. As expected not everything went perfectly to start with but after we tested 42 appointments, systems were running smoothly. Training is continuing for all staff to ensure that we are ready to vaccinate several hundred people on Monday."

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