

## 6.7.2021\_NST\_MOSTI\_CITF To Plug 'Flaws' In Vax Backup List

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# CITF TO PLUG 'FLAWS' IN VAX BACKUP LIST

This is to prevent manipulation of appointment system, says Khairy

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**T**HE Covid-19 Immunisation Task Force (CITF) is in the process of plugging loopholes in the backup list mechanism to prevent any manipulation of the vaccination appointment system.

Covid-19 National Immunisation Programme (NIP) Coordinating Minister Khairy Jamaluddin said the backup list was initially managed only by the CITF to ensure that Covid-19 vaccines were fully utilised at vaccination centres (PPVs).

Since then, the system has evolved, with state Health Departments supplying the backup list.

"In other PPVs, healthcare organisations or organisations will be using their (backup lists). This list, however, has to be approved by the PPV coordinator, usually a representative from the Health Ministry."

"Nevertheless, we are aware of some of the loopholes and are working on plugging them as quickly as possible," he said during the weekly CITF press conference.

Khairy, who is science, technology and innovation minister, was asked to comment on claims that vaccination appointments were being sold.

Reports had claimed that volunteers at certain PPVs were found to be selling appointment slots to those wanting to jump the queue.

Khairy said police made two arrests last week and that the case was being investigated.

"The CITF is working with the police to facilitate investigation into the case, especially on technical matters regarding the manipulation of the appointment system," he said.

On another subject, Khairy said that there could only be one digital certificate issued for an individual's fully-vaccinated status.

"It (the digital certificate) should be none other than the one issued by the Health Ministry which appears on the MySejahtera application."

"This is important to ensure the integrity of the vaccines," he said when asked to comment on the Selangor Vaccination Programme.

He said the CITF was working closely with the Selangor Menteri Besar's Office to develop a process flow for the implementation of the state's Covid-19 vaccination drive.

Apart from the issuance of digital certificates, the process flow will also outline requirements for the vaccine management system.

"We have to look at the process flow of the vaccine management system, which is the back end of the pharmacy. That must be consistent with what is being used by the Health Ministry."

"Hence, we are working out the process flow with Selangor, as well as with other states that are interested in implementing the vaccination programme for the respective states."

Khairy said students who were planning to further their studies abroad would start to receive their Covid-19 jobs this month.

He said a total of 8,645 vaccine appointments had been given to these students.

"However, some of the students have not reached the age of 18 on the date of their vaccine appointment. These students can get their jobs as long as they turn 18 this year, provided that their parents or guardians sign a consent form," he said.

As for adolescent vaccinations, Khairy said only students with underlying medical conditions who have to attend school would be given the vaccine first.

He added that only teachers, school support staff and students with underlying medical conditions will receive their Covid-19 vaccine before schools could reopen.

He said the rest of the students



A healthcare worker inoculating a man with visual impairment at a Covid-19 vaccination outreach programme in George Town yesterday. (P: 39 (MAM), SAG)

will be inoculated in subsequent phases after the adult population had been fully vaccinated.

This decision, he said, was in line with the recommendation made by the Covid-19 Vaccine Candidate Selection Committee.

Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Adham Baba said the committee had recommended that adolescents with chronic underlying medical conditions be given the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine.

He said the vaccine was the first Covid-19 vaccine to be approved for children aged 12 to 15 by the United States Food and Drug Administration, European Medicines Agency and the United Kingdom's Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency in May.

This, he said, was based on data from clinical trials involving thousands of adults above the age of 18, as well as 2,260 adolescents ranging in age from 12 to 15.

Dr Adham said although children accounted for 15 per cent of all Covid-19 cases in Malaysia, they tend to be asymptomatic or have milder symptoms and were less likely to develop severe illnesses.

He said up to June 29, 116,378 children in Malaysia had contracted Covid-19.

Of the total, 37,206 were aged between 13 and 17.