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## JOINT STATEMENT

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Ministry of Health  
Office of the Provincial Health Officer

### **Joint statement on first deployment of AstraZeneca vaccine in B.C.**

VICTORIA – Dr. Bonnie Henry, B.C.’s provincial health officer (PHO), and Adrian Dix, Minister of Health, have issued the following joint statement regarding British Columbia’s COVID-19 response:

“As the first doses of AstraZeneca/SII (AZ/SII) arrive in B.C., work is underway to use this vaccine to assist with outbreak response in communities and protect workers throughout the province.

“When B.C. initially launched its COVID-19 Immunization Plan, we were hopeful additional vaccines would be approved so we could allocate them to priority and front-line workers and industries ahead of Phase 3.

“Now, the initial shipment of AZ/SII vaccine will be used to protect workers in industries where full use of personal protective equipment and barriers can be challenging, outbreaks and clusters have occurred or are ongoing, and workers must live or work in congregate settings. These efforts will complement B.C.’s foundational age-based immunization plan.

“Immunizing workers in these settings will not only protect workers, it will also protect the communities around them, including many rural, remote and Indigenous communities.

“By deploying AZ/SII in this way, B.C. will be able to manage outbreaks, prevent them before they occur and deploy vaccines strategically to reduce COVID-19 transmission in B.C.

“Public health and WorkSafeBC have identified the highest risk categories of worksites through the COVID-19 Workplace Task Group established by the PHO in November 2020. These include:

- food processing plants, including poultry, fruit and fish processing;
- agricultural operations with congregate worker accommodations, including farms, nurseries and greenhouses;
- large industrial camps under the PHO Industrial Camps order with congregate accommodations for workers; and
- other large congregate living settings for workers where isolation and quarantine is difficult and outbreaks are ongoing.

“Remember, the best vaccine for you is the one available now. The BC Immunization Committee is reviewing the latest data and recommendations from the National Advisory Committee on Immunization to determine additional workplaces that will be prioritized for immunization using the AZ/SII vaccine. The updated plan for additional shipments of AZ/SII vaccine will be released in the coming days.”

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