



MEDIA RELEASE

Subject: Vaccination is Critical to Restarting the Economy

8th August, 2021

The T&T Chamber is relieved that the Government has agreed to allow the retail sector to open. This is hopefully another step towards reopening sectors which are still closed such as cinemas, day spas and salons, churches etc and to allowing full operations in others, such as the restaurant industry.

We are yet to understand the true long-term economic impact to our citizens and businesses. Many of our businesses have been significantly affected since March 2020 and cannot not sustain more of these cycles of opening and closures.

Our collective actions in the coming weeks will determine whether we can continue to open additional sectors safely or face another wave of infections.

Citizens and businesses must collectively take personal responsibility to follow the health protocols; wash hands, wear your mask and socially distance. Businesses must also do their part to provide a safe environment for their employees and customers by implementing robust health and safety standards. This is even more crucial in high risk environments where there is increased potential for virus transmission.

The decision to get vaccinated has to be a layer of protection that our citizens take to protect us all from hospitalization, curb the death rate and ultimately preserve lives and livelihoods. Vaccination is also critical in protecting us against existing variants and preventing the emergence of new variants. There are now the Alpha, Beta, Gamma, Lambda, Delta and the Delta-plus variants. The latter two have proven to be incredibly transmissible and are by far the most contagious variant of this virus. The positive news is that, regardless of the variant, almost all hospitalizations and deaths are preventable once an individual is vaccinated.

Trinidad and Tobago needs to achieve herd immunity so that we can sustainably restart all sectors of the economy and to get our society closer to the way we were as a people before the virus took hold. We are fortunate to be in a position to learn from the mistakes made in other countries, note best practices and take appropriate preemptive actions to ensure we reopen responsibly to save lives and livelihoods.

The most responsible thing every citizen can do today is to get vaccinated and we encourage you to reach out to a trusted medical professional to discuss any concerns. The T&T Chamber and AMCHAM in collaboration with TTCSI are executing the NAPA Mass Vaccination site and we assure you, that when you come to NAPA, the medical professionals will address your queries about the vaccine. **From Monday 9th August, 9:00am to 6:00pm we will be administering first doses of the AstraZeneca Vaccine and will also continue to administer the second dose of Sinopharm.** Walk-ins will be accommodated.

END