

COVID-19 Vaccines - Mass Rollouts begin but hurdles are halting progress

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Abstracts

COVID-19 Vaccines - Mass Rollouts begin but hurdles are halting progress

SUMMARY

2021 has started tougher than many expected with new variants causing a surge in cases with health systems once again overwhelmed globally. This has prevented economic recovery which seemed to be on the mend in the summer when infection rates had fallen. Global economic growth is still expected to rebound quickly but this is unlikely to be as high as previously estimated, the World Bank has already reduced its forecast to 4% for 2021. Despite this, the rapid creation of vaccines has offered hope and a way out of the crisis is now visible.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

In February 2021, three vaccines have been approved by the World Health Organization, but close to 100 vaccine makers have started clinical trials with around a fifth in final stages. Sputnik V, a Russian vaccine was the first to be announced but has yet to see regulatory approval or mass rollout. Chinese vaccine makers Sinovac and Sinopharm have begun distributing their vaccines domestically as well as abroad in countries such as the UAE and Bahrain. The different types of vaccinology used (mRNA, viral vector, inactivated, protein subunit) demonstrate the variety of solutions scientists have discovered to defeat the pandemic.

Vaccine producers have faced difficulties ensuring supply chains don't collapse and agreed orders are met whilst governments are trying to implement logistical

approaches to domestic vaccination programs. Additionally, numerous regulatory committees approving different vaccines at different times, poor management from heads of state and public vaccine skepticism as compounded logistical issues. The EU and AstraZeneca's relationship has become more fraught in recent days with the firm warning of supply issues to the EU due to a "production problem". The EU has called for supplies of the vaccine in the UK to be directed to them and claim that AstraZeneca are legally obliged to. In the US, the inauguration of Joe Biden provides hope to a more carefully planned vaccine plan with a greater sense of urgency.

COVAX is the vaccine arm of the WHO's Access to COVID-19 (ACT) Accelerator created in order to provide low and middle income countries with vaccine access. With much of the research and development of vaccines taking place in high income western countries there is concern over fair distribution of the virus with these countries also racing to order first. Developed countries have been accused of over ordering preventing from others getting access. For example, Canada has ordered enough doses to vaccinate the population five times over whilst the US and UK have ordered twice as much as they need. This was addressed by the WHO this month with the Director-General, Dr Tedros Adhanom, warning of a 'catastrophic moral failure'.

SCOPE

Examine how the response to COVID-19 has been developing

See what the major vaccine developments are

Understand the key differences between different medical approaches

Learn what the difference between vaccines are

REASONS TO BUY

What vaccines options are becoming available?

What countries are adopting which options?

How is the vaccine rollout developing?

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About

2021 has started tougher than many expected with new variants causing a surge in cases with health systems once again overwhelmed globally. This has prevented economic recovery which seemed to be on the mend in the summer when infection rates had fallen.

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