



## COVID-19: VACCINATION

# ver.di recommends coronavirus vaccination

### Public sector workers in the health care sector should choose vaccination on the basis of scientific knowledge.

The first vaccines against the coronavirus are now available. This raises the prospect that we can effectively stem the spread of the pandemic and gradually overcome the massive restrictions in societal, economic and social life over the coming months. It is welcome news that workers in the health care sector will be given priority, for they are on the front line of the struggle against the pandemic. They have a greater risk of infection and are in direct contact with people who are especially at risk.

**The vaccination campaign will be successful if it is voluntary and transparent and eases the burden on health care workers:**

- ▶ The decision to be vaccinated is voluntary and must remain so. There should be no discrimination on the basis of whether a person has been vaccinated – neither in society in general nor in the workplace. There should be no discrimination in recruitment procedures or other settings.
- ▶ Access to vaccination must be made as simple as possible for health care workers and should not take up additional time. This means that vaccinations should take place at the workplace and should be recognised as working time and remunerated as such, including waiting times, immediate aftercare, etc.

**Sylvia Bühler** member of the Federal Board of ver.di and director of the area of Health, Social Services, Welfare and Churches:



*“Employees in health care institutions are facing huge challenges in the pandemic and are under extreme pressure. Many feel that they have been abandoned by political decision-makers who have failed to ensure that more personnel are available and that working conditions improve. Many have been denied financial recognition of their services. For many years, little or nothing has been done to address the health risks they face through work overload. Our colleagues are rightly angry about this. The right conclusions must be drawn from this pandemic: we need a health care system based on need that ensures good working conditions. ver.di is fighting for these goals. At the same time, we support the measures to contain the pandemic. The vaccination campaign opens up the prospect that we will once again be able to lead a more or less normal life in society. It is also a means of relieving the pressure on the health care system and its workers. I call on all colleagues to opt for vaccination on the basis of scientific knowledge. Together in solidarity we will overcome this crisis.”*



- ▶ In the institutions and areas with priority, all workers must be entitled to an early vaccination regardless of whether they are employed directly or via a services company or hired labour company. The same applies to medical students doing their clinical internship and to other personnel working in the institutions concerned. Protective measures such as distancing, protective clothing and tests must be maintained until the pandemic subsides.
- ▶ Tests and vaccinations should not impose additional burdens on employees. It is important that employees, visitors, patients and persons needing care are regularly tested; however, such tests cannot be carried out alongside their other duties by staff

members who are already overstretched. Additional personnel are also required for consent procedures and other tasks connected with the vaccination campaign, and the costs should be borne by health insurers.

In ver.di's view, the benefits of vaccination far outweigh the risks. Health care workers are experts in hygiene and protective measures, yet due to their professional activity they suffer disproportionately from infections. Getting vaccinated provides a high degree of individual protection against a Covid-19 illness but is also an act of solidarity with others. A high vaccination rate is the only way to contain the pandemic in the near future and to preserve the lives of many people.



