



REMARKS BY

The Minister of Health

The Hon. Kim Wilson, JP, MP,

VACCINATION WEEK OF THE AMERICAS

Monday, 24 April 2023, 11 am

at AB Place Media Room

Good morning.

This year is the 21st anniversary of the Vaccination Week in the Americas (VWA) which is being held April 22 - 29. And, every year as part of Vaccination Week of the Americas, more than 40 countries and territories in the Americas come together to recognise the significance of immunising and vaccinating their populations.

An exceptional effort is made to reach individuals who may not have consistent access to health services and people living in urban areas.

The VWA 2023 theme is “Get up to date, #EachVaccineCounts.’

VWA has been a critical force in immunisation in the Americas, resulting in more than 806 million people being vaccinated against various diseases since 2002.

Bermuda will be celebrating in four ways.

1. We are continuing with the advancement in reducing the number of vaccine-preventable diseases that have caused death and disabilities to children worldwide, such as measles, rubella, polio, whooping cough, and tetanus.
2. We are encouraging parents to vaccinate their infants and children according to the Bermuda Childhood Immunization Schedule.
3. We will create a significant recognition of Vaccine Week in the Americas and immunisation to promote vaccination as a productive means of fighting childhood diseases.
4. We look to expand on policies that will increase trust in vaccination through strategies targeting community stakeholders.

In addition, on Friday April 28th the Department of Health will hold its DanceWalk with Bermy Germy throughout Hamilton starting at 12:15 pm. If you are out and about, take a picture with Bermy Germy, upload it to your social media and tag the Department of Health Bermuda for a chance to win a prize.

Right after the DanceWalk, at around 1 pm, the Department of Health will gather at City Hall to launch a new and exciting App that will provide health information at your fingertips.

The Department of Health invites the public to join us in launching HealthyPeople Bda. You can download the App, learn the onboarding process, and learn how to navigate it. The first 50 people downloading the App will be entered into a draw for a prize.

As we gradually move forward from the COVID-19 pandemic, and with the help of the COVID-19 vaccines, Bermuda has gained good coronavirus protection in our community.

Around the region, though, there have been incidents of measles outbreaks, and Bermuda is no exception as we are at risk with more travellers coming to the island.

To strengthen the uptake and increase confidence in vaccines in Bermuda, the Expanded Programme on Immunization under the Department of Health will have catch-up clinics at the Victoria Street clinic beginning on Saturday, April 29.

During our week's celebration for Vaccination Week in the Americas, we will promote the catch-up clinic and educate the public on the reason for having the measles, mumps, rubella, (MMR) vaccine, as it is essential for clients and for building up immunity in the community. We will also provide education on the importance of boys and girls being vaccinated for Human Papillomavirus (HPV).

Immunisations have been one of the most successful public health interventions to save lives, locally and globally. The benefits have expanded to adults, and the Department of Health encourages the family to participate in vaccination to protect Bermuda and the world.

Thank you.