



Australian Federation
of Islamic Councils



AFIC National
Sharia Board

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

The Australian Federation of Islamic Councils' National Sharia Board Ruling on the Coronavirus Vaccine

Media Statement

11 February 2021

Introduction

As the issue of vaccines, especially in relation to the Coronavirus has become controversial, it is important to issue detailed information on the topic. Much of the material below has been translated from other languages. In this regard, we've opted for the highest possible accuracy to the form of expression used. For ease of reference, this paper will be divided into different sections:

- Introduction
- Background
- Summary of findings by leading scholars and Fatwa Councils from around the world
- Anticipated outcomes in Australia
- The Ruling of AFIC's National Sharia Board

Background

AFIC's National Sharia Board has undertaken scholarly research of primary Islamic sources, rulings by Muslim jurists, the advice of medical professionals and the content of available Coronavirus research and Vaccines. Many questions have been raised by Muslims about the virus and the various available vaccines. It is these questions that compel us to address this matter. We have not been asked or commissioned by any government authority to address this matter, we embarked on this role solely in pursuit of the pleasure of Allah, the hope to save people from illness, save lives and for the common good.



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Islam always promotes the saving of life as per the words of the Almighty: **“Whoever saves a life, it is as if he has saved all humanity” (5:32)**. We note that “The giving of a Fatwa (Islamic ruling) is not permissible except by the person who is qualified (ahl) for it, this person must be knowledgeable of the Quran, the Sunnah, the Usool Alfihq, the understood purposes (Maqasid) of the Shariah and the Ma-alat (effects). On this basis, AFIC's National Sharia Board advises Australian Muslims the following:

Matters must be considered by experts in accordance with the words of the Almighty Allah as recorded in the Holy Qur'an:

“Ask those of dhikr (relevant knowledge) if you do not know” (16:43) and **“Ask one who knows” (25:59)**.

There is an overriding Islamic principle of *“No Harm”* based on the Hadith of our prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings upon him: *“No harming or seeking harm.”*

There is an obligation on all Muslims to seek treatment for illnesses based on the hadith of our prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings upon him: *“Seek treatment, there is no affliction except that Allah has created a cure for it.”*

Treatment is of two types, one is to treat an existing ailment and the other is to prevent the spread, contagion or transmission of an ailment.

We, the Muslims are instructed to pursue the means and then rely on Allah the Almighty. Our prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings upon him, said: *“tie (your camel) and then rely (on Allah).”*



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Matters are Halal unless there exists a prohibition for them in Sharia.

The Almighty Allah has given us a general principal: **“As for one who is forced by necessity without transgressing or returning, there is no sin upon him” (2:173).**

The Almighty Allah commanded the believers: **“O you who believe, avoid much of suspicion, for in some cases, suspicion is sinful” (49:12).** Conspiracy theories in general are based on suspicion and not on clear indisputable facts, whilst some might be valid, some are not and hence harmful and therefore sinful.

Issues raised by AFIC previously and other faith communities regarding ethically obtained vaccine components have been taken into consideration.

AFIC's National Sharia Board has considered the ingredients of available vaccines. We have also considered the longstanding Fatwa (ruling) on Istihala or transformation of component ingredients.

Fatwa Councils and leading scholars around the world have stated:

From an Islamic perspective, immunisation falls under the category of medicine and therapy that we are commanded to pursue. Vaccine is considered pre-emptive/protective medicine in relation to individuals. In the case of a pandemic a healthy person would be considered ill due to the increased likelihood of becoming afflicted and the entire community will have a need for treatment.



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It is Islamically incumbent upon all groups and demographics of the society to conform with all the health and administrative directives which come from the relevant bodies in the country, in addition to taking all the necessary precautions to prevent the spread of disease. This would be the same in relation to the vaccines if the relevant authorities give a clear directive in that regard.

There is overwhelming support amongst Islamic scholars that treatment to prevent disease-transmission or contagion is required.

Medical professionals have made a compelling case for vaccination, trials in various nations have shown which vaccines have greater efficacy.

Anticipated outcomes in Australia:

The situation at present reveals that Australia is not yet ready to start vaccinating the population.

AFIC's National Sharia Board anticipates that once the Australian government is ready to vaccinate the population, the government will reach out to society to provide assurances about the safety and efficacy of the vaccine. It is a standard practice in Australia for government to reach out through community and religious leaders as well as through advertising campaigns.

The public space has been flooded with COVID and vaccine information for over a year. No government can afford to impose widely a vaccine with harmful or lasting side-effects. Treating such side-effects will pose a drain on Medicare and the economy as it will severely impact productivity.



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Whatever suspicions one might harbour about governments, governments are aware that the wellness of society is crucial for national sovereignty and economic revival.

For these reasons, we believe that we will be presented with ample evidence to the efficacy and safety of the vaccine that will be rolled out once it is ready.

It is on this basis that AFIC's National Sharia Board makes the following ruling:

We, the Muslim community must be alert and active participants in matters that concern our community and our country.

We, the Muslim community must not promote or disseminate unsupported conspiracy theories in relation to any matter and must stick to proven facts.

We, the Muslim community must consider the matter of vaccination rationally. We must always put the saving of lives ahead of smaller concerns. Once the medical professionals' consent to a vaccination program, we advise that believing Muslims should:

- 1** – Take the means of healing (including vaccination if deemed necessary) and rely on Allah to heal us.
- 2** – Seek the pleasure of Allah in taking treatment with the intention that we are doing so to help stop the transmission of disease and help keep ourselves and society healthy and safe.
- 3** – Continue to do all we can to help stop the transmission and spread of disease.



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Whilst AFIC's National Sharia Board stands by its findings and Fatwa (ruling), it welcomes scholarly disagreement that can be backed by sound references.

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