

Denmark to expand COVID-19 vaccination program by delaying second dose

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Danish health officials said Monday the country would space out the two doses of the COVID-19 vaccine by up to six weeks, allowing more people to receive a first injection.

The new recommendations are both for the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine, which the country has already started administering, and the [vaccine candidate](#) developed by Moderna which is in the process of being approved by the EU.

"So far we have said that there should be three to four weeks between each injection, but you can easily wait up to six weeks," director of the Danish Health Authority Soren Brostrom told broadcaster TV2.

The amended guideline follows the announcement by the UK to extend the interval between the two doses of the Pfizer/BioNTech and AstraZeneca vaccines used in Britain by up to 12 weeks.

"This way, we will be able to vaccinate more people now," Mr Brostrom added, stressing that this guidelines were based on documentation

submitted by laboratories.

In the country of 5.8 million people, nearly 47,000 people, including Queen Margrethe II, have received a first dose of the [vaccine](#) since the immunisation campaign began on 27 December.

Initially, the country plans to vaccinate residents of retirement homes, then the vulnerable over 65s and frontline healthcare workers.

In late December, to curb a rise in cases and hospitalisations, Denmark extended a slew of restrictive measures until January 17.

These include the closure of shops, except for pharmacies and food shops, as well as schools and universities, cultural venues, bars, cafes and restaurants—except for take-away meals.

Since the start of the pandemic, Denmark has recorded 171,434 cases and 1,389 deaths, but the country also worried about cases of the new variant of the virus recently discovered in the UK, which according to the British authorities is up to 74 percent more contagious.

"In short, it requires us to do even more to keep the infection under control," Denmark's health minister Magnus Heunicke said in a post on Facebook.

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