

**Written questions member's Islandcouncil for the Executive Council/ Government Commissioners.**  
(art.159, lid 1 WolBES/ art. 46 RvO Islandcouncil)

Issue : Written questions regarding positive Covid 19 cases of August 2021  
Date question : August 10<sup>th</sup> 2021  
Sender : Council Member R.Merkman  
Date answer : **within 15 days**  
Responsible Com./Gov.Com. : M.A.U. Francis  
Responsible editor :

During the latter part of last week, the public of Statia was surprised with 2 positive Covid-19 cases. Covid-19 #1 is an imported case. Covid-19 #2 is a local case.  
I would kindly like to submit the following questions (art. 159.1 WolBES/47 RvO Island Council) to the Executive Council of the island territory of Statia.

I would like to start with a clear overview of the situation

Case 1: The COVID19 case on Thursday the 5<sup>th</sup> of August was an imported case: a journalist entering on the 4<sup>th</sup> became Covid positive who was vaccinated and was mostly adhering to the monitoring protocol, he was transferred to the hospitainer on the 6<sup>th</sup> of August and to Sint Maarten on the 7<sup>th</sup> of August

Case 2: on Saturday the 7<sup>th</sup> of August a returning patient who was in quarantine (returned on the 30<sup>th</sup> of July) from SMMC became positive this is an imported case. He was transferred to the hospitainer on Monday the 9<sup>th</sup> of August in first instance because of the needed medical care for his (non-covid) medical treatment on Sint Maarten. On the 12<sup>th</sup> of August he is transferred to Sint Maarten as his COVID symptoms increased.

Case 3 on Monday the 10<sup>th</sup> of August the camera lady who accompanied the journalist tested positive, she was quarantine upon the positive test of the journalist and is in isolation in a hotel room

**QUESTIONS:**

1. Covid-19 #1, has it been verified if the individual stuck to the prescribe entrant protocol for Vaccinated persons?

The journalist mostly stuck to the protocol by wearing a mask during his visit. He however has been shaking hands which should not take place and he has been joined in the car by a Statian citizen. Both should not take place as in those circumstances social distancing is not fully possible.

1a. is driving in a car with other individuals and visiting a restaurant allowed within the entry policy for vaccinated persons? And, if the individual didn't adhere to the entry policy, what are the sanctions and/or penalties that can be imposed?

Driving a car is not allowed together with persons who are already longer on the Island as within a car you cannot keep the required distance, however this has not been explicitly addressed in the protocols, reason for us to update the protocols and address this specifically.

There is no sanction on not adhering to the monitoring protocol as it is put down as a behavioral advice to which the persons confirm to adhere by agreeing on the conditions to enter Statia

2. Seeing the risks and dangers involved for the population of Statia what is being done about the posting of sensitive information and the perceived sensationalism of his infection on the internet? In your expert opinion, has this fostered or stigmatized our covid-19 vaccination program on Statia?

As a journalist, citizen he has the freedom to express his opinion, as government we cannot interfere with this right. We only can react by explaining the facts.

The impact on the vaccination program is not clear for us. For some persons it will be seen as a wake-up call, others will say: he is vaccinated and still gets covid why should I vaccinate.

3. Did this individual visit the children daycare at Lynch? If he did come in the area of the daycare was the premises disinfected before use by the teachers and children?  
 He visited shortly the daycare. As the conclusion that he was COVID positive only was drawn several hours after his visit any form of infection disinfection was not useful. If he would have been spraying particles during his visit (while he was wearing a mask) that would have been minimal. Still the management of the daycare has been advised to sanitize before re-opening as an extra precaution, the Public Health has expressed availability to assist with this.
4. Covid-19 #2, was the GGD able to verify where the patient came in contact with the virus?  
 As he was in quarantine and adhered to the protocol, (as well as his partner) the conclusion was that the virus has been contracted on Sint Maarten, where he had a medical treatment before travelling back to Statia.
5. If it was during the quarantine period, has it been verified if there was an asymptomatic carrier that transmitted the virus to Covid-19 #2?  
 There is no-evidence of an a-symptomatic carrier. We do not believe that the patient got infected in St. Eustatius.
6. If the infection took place at the SMMC, what measures have been put in place to assure that these type of infections don't occur again? Also are the regular "bubble flights" going to be put on hold?  
 The SMMC has a strict policy in place for COVID-19 prevention, but with an outbreak on an Island it is impossible to assure that the SMMC will not be affected. At the moment only urgent referrals will take place and for this bubble visits are still possible. Meetings with all stakeholders involved (VWS, Statia, Saba, SMMC, RIVM, ZVK, SEHCF) take place about the way forward. This includes agreements on the bubble flights
7. Was Covid-19 #2 required to undergo a PCR test before traveling to Statia?  
 Yes, everyone, also medical patients who are longer than 48 hours off Statia need to have a pcr test upon return
8. Seeing that SMMC has many issues with infections at their facility and also the exploding covid situation on St. Maarten, what steps has ZVK and the local government taken to protect patients travelling for medical care? Dialysis patients and bubble flight?  
 ZVK, SEHCF, SMMC and public health are in regular contact to evaluate the risk of patients visiting SMMC and will take appropriate measures for all categories of patients
9. What is the status of the much talked about dialysis center for Statia?  
 Discussion on this take place in a steering group regarding the health on Statia in which the public entity the SEHCF and the ministry of VWS are represented. No conclusions are drawn yet.
10. Seeing that SMMC has many issues with infections and overcrowding at their facility and also the exploding covid situation on St. Maarten. Why is that facility still the primary care giver for Statia?  
 Primary care is dealt with by the SEHCF, Care in the SMMC is secondary care. As this is also in normal times the preferred caretaker for secondary care this stays the same during this pandemic. ZVK, advised by RIVM always looks to alternatives. Only if the risk level of an alternative is reasonably lower transfer of care will take place, which has been the case in an earlier phase of the pandemic. At the moment this is only the case in Bonaire and Bonaire only offers a limited amount of specialisms.
11. Has an alternative primary care giver for Statian patients been look into at this time by ZVK or the local government?  
 See answer on 10

**ANSWERS:**