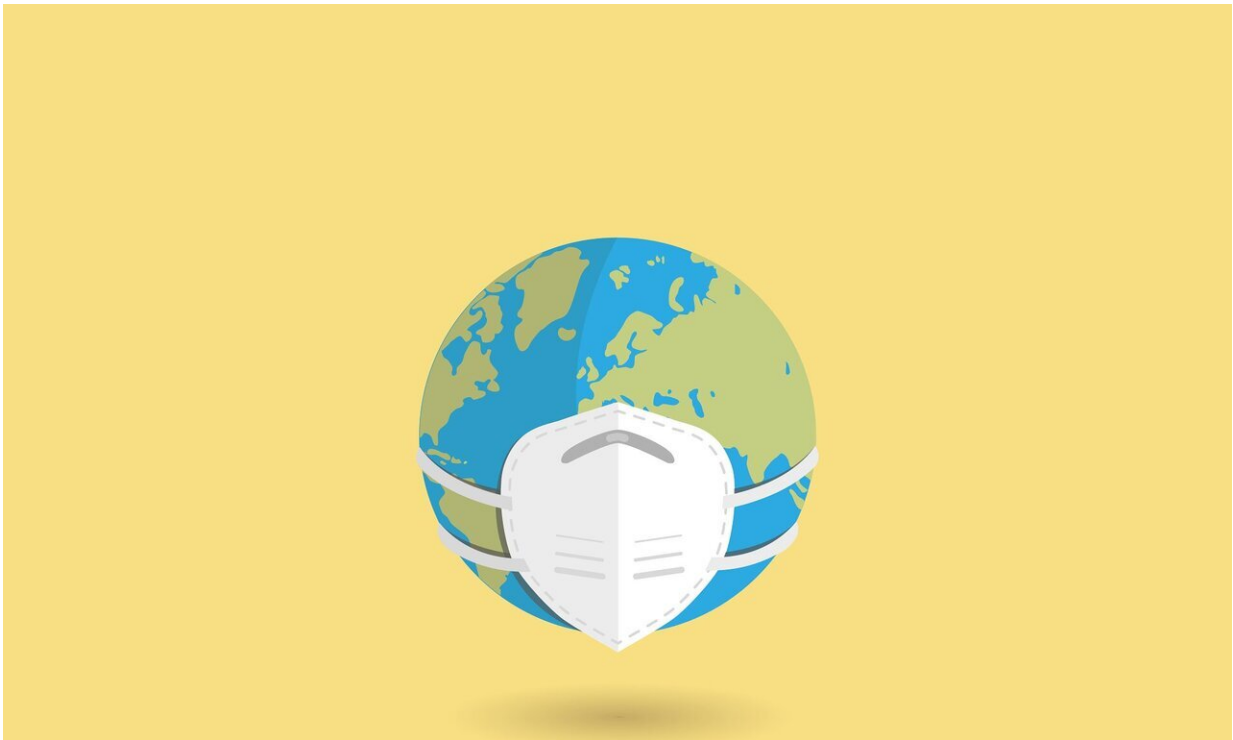


# First vaccinations given in Haiti since start of pandemic

July 17 2021, by Dánica Coto

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Health care workers and senior citizens were the first people vaccinated on Friday in Haiti as part of a test run after the country recently received 500,000 doses from the United Nations.

The vaccinations were given to more than 30 people at the Hospital

University of Peace in the capital of Port-au-Prince under the supervision of Haiti's Health Ministry, the Pan American Health Organization told The Associated Press.

On Wednesday, Haiti received its first vaccine doses since the pandemic began as part of a U.S. donation to the United Nations' COVAX program for low-income countries. A PAHO spokeswoman previously told the AP that they are all Moderna vaccines.

Vaccinations will continue through the weekend, PAHO said.

Haiti has reported more than 19,300 confirmed coronavirus cases and more than 480 deaths amid the biggest wave of COVID-19 cases since the pandemic began. Experts believe those numbers are widely underreported since there is scant testing in Haiti, which has more than 11 million people.

PAHO said this week that it was worried about the thousands of Haitians who have lost their homes amid a recent spike in gang violence and are now crammed into crowded shelters it said could become "active hot spots" for COVID-19 transmission.

Haiti also is now grappling with the aftermath of the July 7 assassination of President Jovenel Moïse.

The vaccinations began nearly two months after the government announced a health emergency and imposed a curfew and [safety measures](#). Face masks are required to enter some businesses, but few Haitians are following the measures despite crowded buses and marketplaces.

In addition, health experts have warned that authorities need to step up educational campaigns amid widespread distrust of the vaccine and of

government officials.

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