HSBC Global Research

5 January 2021

# COVID-19 vaccines

## A UK experiment, but potentially with global implications

**Free to View**
Equities - Pharmaceuticals

**Global**

- UK COVID-19 vaccine recommendations prioritise wider 1st dose administration over 2 doses per patient, 3 weeks apart
- The recommendations look to be designed to protect the UK healthcare system from overload in the short term
- However, the biggest risk is a lack of sufficient protection and the potential induction of more virulent virus variants

**Steve McGarry***
**Global Head of Healthcare Research**
HSBC Bank plc

**Julie Mead***
**Analyst**
HSBC Bank plc

** Employed by a non-US affiliate of HSBC Securities (USA) Inc, and is not registered/ qualified pursuant to FINRA regulations*

**UK – prioritisation of first vaccine dose and potential use of a different second vaccine.** The UK has now approved two anti-COVID-19 vaccines: BNT161b2 from Pfizer/BioNTech and AZD1222 from AstraZeneca, both of which required 2 doses given around 3 weeks apart to provide 95% and 62% protection respectively, against COVID-19 infection, based on interim phase III data. The UK's Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) has also issued guidance, prioritising administration of the first dose of either vaccine in an attempt to reduce infections and mortality in as many individuals as possible rather than providing greater protection for fewer individuals; after the first dose of either vaccine, the protection rate was around 52%, according to phase III data. The first dose prioritisation means that patients may not receive the fully protective second dose of either vaccine for up to 12 weeks after the first dose. Patients may also be given a different vaccine for the second dose.

**The UK guidelines are not based on hard clinical data but likely reflect the escalating scale of the UK's challenge.** The JCVI's recommendations on first dose prioritisation and on potentially using a different vaccine for the second dose are not based on hard clinical data. The first dose prioritisation is based on the interpretation of short-term clinical data, not pre-specified clinical end-points, and there is no evidence that delaying the administration of the second dose of BNT161b2 until up to 12 weeks will provide enough protection. The suggestion that a different vaccine could be used for the second dose is not based on any clinical data at all, only scientific rationale but with no evidence. With a more virulent B1.1.7 COVID-19 variant spreading rapidly in the UK, the JCVI's recommendation likely reflects a UK situation that is likely to worsen before vaccinations can make a tangible difference.

**If the UK experiment fails to curtail infections, COVID-19 transmission and mortality, it could adversely affect the UK and other countries.** A risk with this experiment, however, is that if the first dose prioritisation strategy fails to provide sufficient protection, the new virus variant (B1.1.7) could continue to spread at a high rate. A bigger risk is that a high rate of viral transmission together with vaccine-induced selection pressure might arguably lead to more virulent COVID-19 variants and a worse – not a better – outcome for the UK and potentially for other countries as well.

*This is a redacted version of the report published on 05-Jan-21. Please contact your HSBC representative or email AskResearch@hsbc.com for information.*



**Issuer of report:** HSBC Bank plc

**View HSBC Global Research at:**
***https://www.research.hsbc.com***

# Disclosure appendix

**Analyst Certification**

The following analyst(s), economist(s), or strategist(s) who is(are) primarily responsible for this report, including any analyst(s) whose name(s) appear(s) as author of an individual section or sections of the report and any analyst(s) named as the covering analyst(s) of a subsidiary company in a sum-of-the-parts valuation certifies(y) that the opinion(s) on the subject security(ies) or issuer(s), any views or forecasts expressed in the section(s) of which such individual(s) is(are) named as author(s), and any other views or forecasts expressed herein, including any views expressed on the back page of the research report, accurately reflect their personal view(s) and that no part of their compensation was, is or will be directly or indirectly related to the specific recommendation(s) or views contained in this research report: Steve McGarry and Julie Mead

**Important disclosures**

**Equities: Stock ratings and basis for financial analysis**

HSBC and its affiliates, including the issuer of this report ("HSBC") believes an investor's decision to buy or sell a stock should depend on individual circumstances such as the investor's existing holdings, risk tolerance and other considerations and that investors utilise various disciplines and investment horizons when making investment decisions. Ratings should not be used or relied on in isolation as investment advice. Different securities firms use a variety of ratings terms as well as different rating systems to describe their recommendations and therefore investors should carefully read the definitions of the ratings used in each research report. Further, investors should carefully read the entire research report and not infer its contents from the rating because research reports contain more complete information concerning the analysts' views and the basis for the rating.

**From 23rd March 2015 HSBC has assigned ratings on the following basis:**

The target price is based on the analyst's assessment of the stock's actual current value, although we expect it to take six to 12 months for the market price to reflect this. When the target price is more than 20% above the current share price, the stock will be classified as a Buy; when it is between 5% and 20% above the current share price, the stock may be classified as a Buy or a Hold; when it is between 5% below and 5% above the current share price, the stock will be classified as a Hold; when it is between 5% and 20% below the current share price, the stock may be classified as a Hold or a Reduce; and when it is more than 20% below the current share price, the stock will be classified as a Reduce.

Our ratings are re-calibrated against these bands at the time of any 'material change' (initiation or resumption of coverage, change in target price or estimates).

Upside/Downside is the percentage difference between the target price and the share price.

**Prior to this date, HSBC's rating structure was applied on the following basis:**

For each stock we set a required rate of return calculated from the cost of equity for that stock's domestic or, as appropriate, regional market established by our strategy team. The target price for a stock represented the value the analyst expected the stock to reach over our performance horizon. The performance horizon was 12 months. For a stock to be classified as Overweight, the potential return, which equals the percentage difference between the current share price and the target price, including the forecast dividend yield when indicated, had to exceed the required return by at least 5 percentage points over the succeeding 12 months (or 10 percentage points for a stock classified as Volatile*). For a stock to be classified as Underweight, the stock was expected to underperform its required return by at least 5 percentage points over the succeeding 12 months (or 10 percentage points for a stock classified as Volatile*). Stocks between these bands were classified as Neutral.

*A stock was classified as volatile if its historical volatility had exceeded 40%, if the stock had been listed for less than 12 months (unless it was in an industry or sector where volatility is low) or if the analyst expected significant volatility. However, stocks which we did not consider volatile may in fact also have behaved in such a way. Historical volatility was defined as the past month's average of the daily 365-day moving average volatilities. In order to avoid misleadingly frequent changes in rating, however, volatility had to move 2.5 percentage points past the 40% benchmark in either direction for a stock's status to change.

**Rating distribution for long-term investment opportunities**

**As of 04 January 2021, the distribution of all independent ratings published by HSBC is as follows:**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Buy** | 57% | ( 33% of these provided with Investment Banking Services ) |
| **Hold** | 34% | ( 31% of these provided with Investment Banking Services ) |
| **Sell** | 9% | ( 28% of these provided with Investment Banking Services ) |

For the purposes of the distribution above the following mapping structure is used during the transition from the previous to current rating models: under our previous model, Overweight = Buy, Neutral = Hold and Underweight = Sell; under our current model Buy = Buy, Hold = Hold and Reduce = Sell. For rating definitions under both models, please see "Stock ratings and basis for financial analysis" above.

For the distribution of non-independent ratings published by HSBC, please see the disclosure page available at http://www.hsbcnet.com/gbm/financial-regulation/investment-recommendations-disclosures.

To view a list of all the independent fundamental ratings disseminated by HSBC during the preceding 12-month period, please use the following links to access the disclosure page:

Clients of Global Research and Global Banking and Markets: www.research.hsbc.com/A/Disclosures

Clients of HSBC Private Banking: www.research.privatebank.hsbc.com/Disclosures

HSBC and its affiliates will from time to time sell to and buy from customers the securities/instruments, both equity and debt (including derivatives) of companies covered in HSBC Research on a principal or agency basis or act as a market maker or liquidity provider in the securities/instruments mentioned in this report.

Analysts, economists, and strategists are paid in part by reference to the profitability of HSBC which includes investment banking, sales & trading, and principal trading revenues.

Whether, or in what time frame, an update of this analysis will be published is not determined in advance.

Non-U.S. analysts may not be associated persons of HSBC Securities (USA) Inc, and therefore may not be subject to FINRA Rule 2241 or FINRA Rule 2242 restrictions on communications with the subject company, public appearances and trading securities held by the analysts.

Economic sanctions imposed by the EU and OFAC prohibit transacting or dealing in new debt or equity of Russian SSI entities. This report does not constitute advice in relation to any securities issued by Russian SSI entities on or after July 16 2014 and as such, this report should not be construed as an inducement to transact in any sanctioned securities.

For disclosures in respect of any company mentioned in this report, please see the most recently published report on that company available at www.hsbcnet.com/research. HSBC Private Banking clients should contact their Relationship Manager for queries regarding other research reports. In order to find out more about the proprietary models used to produce this report, please contact the authoring analyst.

**Additional disclosures**

1 This report is dated as at 05 January 2021.

2 All market data included in this report are dated as at close 04 January 2021, unless a different date and/or a specific time of day is indicated in the report.

3 HSBC has procedures in place to identify and manage any potential conflicts of interest that arise in connection with its Research business. HSBC's analysts and its other staff who are involved in the preparation and dissemination of Research operate and have a management reporting line independent of HSBC's Investment Banking business. Information Barrier procedures are in place between the Investment Banking, Principal Trading, and Research businesses to ensure that any confidential and/or price sensitive information is handled in an appropriate manner.

4 You are not permitted to use, for reference, any data in this document for the purpose of (i) determining the interest payable, or other sums due, under loan agreements or under other financial contracts or instruments, (ii) determining the price at which a financial instrument may be bought or sold or traded or redeemed, or the value of a financial instrument, and/or (iii) measuring the performance of a financial instrument or of an investment fund.

**Production & distribution disclosures**

1. This report was produced and signed off by the author on 04 Jan 2021 15:12 GMT.
2. In order to see when this report was first disseminated please see the disclosure page available at https://www.research.hsbc.com/R/34/BFMGp9b

# Disclaimer

**Legal entities as at 1 December 2020**

**'UAE' HSBC Bank Middle East Limited, DIFC; HSBC Bank Middle East Limited, Dubai; 'HK' The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited, Hong Kong; 'TW' HSBC Securities (Taiwan) Corporation Limited; 'CA' HSBC Securities (Canada) Inc.; 'France' HSBC Continental Europe; 'Spain' HSBC Continental Europe, Sucursal en España; 'Italy' HSBC Continental Europe, Italy; 'Sweden' HSBC Continental Europe Bank, Sweden Filial; 'DE' HSBC Trinkaus & Burkhardt AG, Düsseldorf; 000 HSBC Bank (RR), Moscow; 'IN' HSBC Securities and Capital Markets (India) Private Limited, Mumbai; 'JP' HSBC Securities (Japan) Limited, Tokyo; 'EG' HSBC Securities Egypt SAE, Cairo; 'CN' HSBC Investment Bank Asia Limited, Beijing Representative Office; The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited, Singapore Branch; The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited, Seoul Securities Branch; The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited, Seoul Branch; HSBC Securities (South Africa) (Pty) Ltd, Johannesburg; HSBC Bank plc, London, Tel Aviv; 'US' HSBC Securities (USA) Inc, New York; HSBC Yatirim Menkul Degerler AS, Istanbul; HSBC México, SA, Institución de Banca Múltiple, Grupo Financiero HSBC; HSBC Bank Australia Limited; HSBC Bank Argentina SA; HSBC Saudi Arabia Limited; The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited, New Zealand Branch incorporated in Hong Kong SAR; The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited, Bangkok Branch; PT Bank HSBC Indonesia; HSBC Qianhai Securities Limited; Banco HSBC S.A.**

**Issuer of report**
**HSBC Bank plc**
8 Canada Square
London, E14 5HQ, United Kingdom
Telephone: +44 20 7991 8888
Fax: +44 20 7992 4880
Website: www.research.hsbc.com

In the UK this document has been issued and approved by HSBC Bank plc ("HSBC") for the information of its Clients (as defined in the Rules of FCA) and those of its affiliates only. It is not intended for Retail Clients in the UK. If this research is received by a customer of an affiliate of HSBC, its provision to the recipient is subject to the terms of business in place between the recipient and such affiliate.

HSBC Securities (USA) Inc. accepts responsibility for the content of this research report prepared by its non-US foreign affiliate. The information contained herein is under no circumstances to be construed as investment advice and is not tailored to the needs of the recipient. All U.S. persons receiving and/or accessing this report and wishing to effect transactions in any security discussed herein should do so with HSBC Securities (USA) Inc. in the United States and not with its non-US foreign affiliate, the issuer of this report.

In the European Economic Area, this publication has been distributed by HSBC Continental Europe or by such other HSBC affiliate from which the recipient receives relevant services

In Singapore, this publication is distributed by The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited, Singapore Branch for the general information of institutional investors or other persons specified in Sections 274 and 304 of the Securities and Futures Act (Chapter 289) ("SFA") and accredited investors and other persons in accordance with the conditions specified in Sections 275 and 305 of the SFA. Only Economics or Currencies reports are intended for distribution to a person who is not an Accredited Investor, Expert Investor or Institutional Investor as defined in SFA. The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited, Singapore Branch accepts legal responsibility for the contents of reports pursuant to Regulation 32C(1)(d) of the Financial Advisers Regulations. This publication is not a prospectus as defined in the SFA. This publication is not a prospectus as defined in the SFA. It may not be further distributed in whole or in part for any purpose. The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited Singapore Branch is regulated by the Monetary Authority of Singapore. Recipients in Singapore should contact a "Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited, Singapore Branch" representative in respect of any matters arising from, or in connection with this report. Please refer to The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited Singapore Branch's website at www.business.hsbc.com.sg for contact details.

In Australia, this publication has been distributed by The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited (ABN 65 117 925 970, AFSL 301737) for the general information of its "wholesale" customers (as defined in the Corporations Act 2001). Where distributed to retail customers, this research is distributed by HSBC Bank Australia Limited (ABN 48 006 434 162, AFSL No. 232595). These respective entities make no representations that the products or services mentioned in this document are available to persons in Australia or are necessarily suitable for any particular person or appropriate in accordance with local law. No consideration has been given to the particular investment objectives, financial situation or particular needs of any recipient.

This publication has been distributed in Japan by HSBC Securities (Japan) Limited. It may not be further distributed, in whole or in part, for any purpose. In Hong Kong, this document has been distributed by The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited in the conduct of its Hong Kong regulated business for the information of its institutional and professional customers; it is not intended for and should not be distributed to retail customers in Hong Kong. The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited makes no representations that the products or services mentioned in this document are available to persons in Hong Kong or are necessarily suitable for any particular person or appropriate in accordance with local law. All inquiries by such recipients must be directed to The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited. In Korea, this publication is distributed by The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited, Seoul Securities Branch ("HBAP SLS") for the general information of professional investors specified in Article 9 of the Financial Investment Services and Capital Markets Act ("FSCMA"). This publication is not a prospectus as defined in the FSCMA. It may not be further distributed in whole or in part for any purpose. HBAP SLS is regulated by the Financial Services Commission and the Financial Supervisory Service of Korea. This publication is distributed in New Zealand by The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited, New Zealand Branch incorporated in Hong Kong SAR.

In Canada, this document has been distributed by HSBC Securities (Canada) Inc. (member IIROC), and/or its affiliates. The information contained herein is under no circumstances to be construed as investment advice in any province or territory of Canada and is not tailored to the needs of the recipient. No securities commission or similar regulatory authority in Canada has reviewed or in any way passed judgment upon these materials, the information contained herein or the merits of the securities described herein, and any representation to the contrary is an offense. In Brazil, this document has been distributed by Banco HSBC S.A. ("HSBC Brazil"), and/or its affiliates. As required by Instruction No. 598/18 of the Securities and Exchange Commission of Brazil (Comissão de Valores Mobiliários), potential conflicts of interest concerning (i) HSBC Brazil and/or its affiliates; and (ii) the analyst(s) responsible for authoring this report are stated on the chart above labelled "HSBC & Analyst Disclosures".

This document is not and should not be construed as an offer to sell or the solicitation of an offer to purchase or subscribe for any investment. HSBC has based this document on information obtained from sources it believes to be reliable but which it has not independently verified; HSBC makes no guarantee, representation or warranty and accepts no responsibility or liability as to its accuracy or completeness. The opinions contained within the report are based upon publicly available information at the time of publication and are subject to change without notice. From time to time research analysts conduct site visits of covered issuers. HSBC policies prohibit research analysts from accepting payment or reimbursement for travel expenses from the issuer for such visits.

Nothing herein excludes or restricts any duty or liability to a customer which HSBC has under the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 or under the Rules of FCA and PRA. A recipient who chooses to deal with any person who is not a representative of HSBC in the UK will not enjoy the protections afforded by the UK regulatory regime. Past performance is not necessarily a guide to future performance. The value of any investment or income may go down as well as up and you may not get back the full amount invested. Where an investment is denominated in a currency other than the local currency of the recipient of the research report, changes in the exchange rates may have an adverse effect on the value, price or income of that investment. In case of investments for which there is no recognised market it may be difficult for investors to sell their investments or to obtain reliable information about its value or the extent of the risk to which it is exposed.

HSBC Bank plc is registered in England No 14259, is authorised by the Prudential Regulation Authority and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and the Prudential Regulation Authority and is a member of the London Stock Exchange. (070905)

If you are an HSBC Private Banking ("PB") customer with approval for receipt of relevant research publications by an applicable HSBC legal entity, you are eligible to receive this publication. To be eligible to receive such publications, you must have agreed to the applicable HSBC entity's terms and conditions ("KRC Terms") for access to the KRC, and the terms and conditions of any other internet banking service offered by that HSBC entity through which you will access research publications using the KRC. Distribution of this publication is the sole responsibility of the HSBC entity with whom you have agreed the KRC Terms.

If you do not meet the aforementioned eligibility requirements please disregard this publication and, if you are a customer of PB, please notify your Relationship Manager. Receipt of research publications is strictly subject to the KRC Terms, which can be found at https://research.privatebank.hsbc.com/ – we draw your attention also to the provisions contained in the Important Notes section therein.



[1162201]