

Advisory Panel on COVID-19 Vaccines convenes meeting to conduct continuous benefit-risk analysis of authorised COVID-19 vaccines

The Advisory Panel on COVID-19 Vaccines (Advisory Panel) convened a meeting today (July 14) to conduct continuous benefit-risk analysis of the authorised COVID-19 vaccines. The meeting was chaired by convenor Professor Wallace Lau Chak-sing.

The Secretary for Food and Health authorised two COVID-19 vaccines, namely the Comirnaty vaccine and the Sinovac vaccine, in accordance with the Prevention and Control of Disease (Use of Vaccines) Regulation (Cap. 599K) (the Regulation) on January 25 and February 18 respectively. To comply with the conditions of authorisation, the authorisation applicants are required to submit the latest clinical data on the vaccines, safety update reports and quality certification documents, etc. for continuous review and monitoring.

At the meeting today, the Advisory Panel reviewed the continuous benefit-risk balance of the two authorised vaccines. After reviewing all the latest available clinical and safety data related to the Comirnaty and Sinovac vaccines, including safety reports submitted by the applicants, the Advisory Panel considered that there was no other new significant safety signal identified, though continuous monitoring was required. In summary, the Advisory Panel still considered that the benefits of the two vaccines outweighed the risks, and that there was no need to recommend changes regarding the use of the two vaccines. Furthermore, the Advisory Panel also examined the application regarding change of details of the Comirnaty vaccine for extension of shelf-life from five days to one month (i.e. 31 days) when being stored at a temperature ranged from 2 to 8 degrees Celsius after thawing, and recommended the approval of relevant application.

The Advisory Panel will submit the relevant views and recommendations to the Secretary for Food and Health for consideration. The information concerned will later be uploaded to the website of the Food and Health Bureau.

A Government spokesman said, "The Government welcomes the Advisory Panel's recommendation to approve the extension of shelf-life of the Comirnaty vaccine when being stored at a temperature ranged from 2 to 8 degrees Celsius after thawing, and considered that the relevant arrangement can enable greater flexibility for the storage, logistics and supply of the Comirnaty vaccine. We will closely keep in view the demand for the Comirnaty vaccine by the public, the amount and timing of vaccine supply, the storage period after vaccine dilution and the operations of Community Vaccination Centres, etc., and holistically consider the arrangement for providing

vaccination service of the Comirnaty vaccine in the future."

"The Government will continue to ensure that the authorised vaccines satisfy the criteria of safety, efficacy and quality, and continue to disseminate to the public and relevant stakeholders the latest safety and scientific information on the relevant vaccines in a timely manner," the spokesman supplemented.