

CE and Principal Officials receive seasonal influenza and COVID-19 vaccines (with photos)

The Chief Executive, Mr John Lee, led a number of Principal Officials to receive seasonal influenza vaccination (SIV) today (October 4) and called on members of the public to get vaccinated early for better protection before the winter influenza season. Mr Lee and some of the officials also received COVID-19 booster concurrently.

Mr Lee said, "Vaccination is one of the most effective means for preventing seasonal influenza and its complications, as well as reducing the risks of hospitalisation and death arising from influenza. It is now the best timing for receiving SIV for effective protection in the coming year against the influenza strains predicted by the World Health Organization in preparation for the impending winter and summer influenza seasons. I strongly appeal to members of the public to seize this best timing for vaccination and get vaccinated as early as possible.

"Through the concerted efforts of various stakeholders in the community under the leadership of the Government, a total of 1.87 million SIV doses were administered under various government vaccination programmes in the 2023/24 season, achieving a record high with around 20 per cent increase from that of the 2022/23 season. I hope that the vaccination rate in this season can reach even greater heights so as to build a more robust protection barrier in society to safeguard citizens' health.

"Moreover, individuals of high-risk priority groups should also receive an additional COVID-19 booster six months after the last dose or COVID-19 infection (whichever is later) to enhance protection and reduce the risks of serious complications and death."

The Secretary for Health, Professor Lo Chung-mau, who had received SIV and COVID-19 vaccination last week, was also present to show support today. He said, "Various SIV programmes commenced on September 26 to provide free or subsidised SIV for eligible persons. I once again urge members of the public to act now and receive SIV in October."

Professor Lo added, "To boost the SIV coverage rate among schoolchildren, special arrangements have been made under the Seasonal Influenza Vaccination School Outreach Programme this year to offer a more flexible choice of vaccine options for kindergartens and childcare centres. They can choose both injectable inactivated influenza vaccines and live attenuated influenza vaccines (LAIV) (i.e. nasal vaccines) for the same or different outreach vaccination activities. Furthermore, the Department of Health (DH) rolled out a pilot scheme in which LAIV will be provided for the first time to primary and secondary schools that had indicated earlier this

year their preference for arranging LAIV for their students. Schools that have yet to join the outreach vaccination programme should enrol as soon as possible and do their part to provide the best protection for schoolchildren."

To offer members of the public greater convenience for receiving SIV this year, the Government specifically designated a number of additional vaccination venues for citizens' selection, including enabling children aged six months to under two years to get vaccinated in the Maternal and Child Health Centres of the DH, and providing vaccination services for eligible persons at District Health Centres (DHCs)/District Health Centre Expresses (DHCEs) across the city. The list of vaccination venues is available at the [SIV page of the Centre for Health Protection \(CHP\) of the DH](#). Eligible persons who wish to receive SIV at DHCs/DHCEs may make reservation for vaccination on the websites of DHCs/DHCEs or by phone. For details, please visit the webpage (www.dhc.gov.hk/en/siv.html).

Members of the public may call the CHP at 2125 2125 or visit the [Vaccination Schemes page](#) for more information.

