

## DH received a report of suspected serious adverse event following COVID-19 vaccination

The Department of Health (DH) announced that as of 4pm (March 9), one report on admission to the intensive care unit (ICU) was received from the Hospital Authority (HA) in the past 24 hours which was a suspected serious adverse event following COVID-19 vaccination.

According to the information provided by the HA, the case involved a 51-year-old man who has history of diabetes, hypertension and hyperlipidaemia. He experienced shortness of breath since March 6 with cough and sputum. He attended the Accident and Emergency Department of Queen Elizabeth Hospital yesterday (March 8) for treatment. He was hospitalised with provisional diagnosis of acute myocardial infarction and was admitted to the ICU last night for further treatment. He is in critical condition. He received a dose of CoronaVac COVID-19 vaccination at Yuen Wo Road Sports Centre Community Vaccination Centre on March 3.

The DH has immediately contacted the HA upon the notification to obtain further information on the incident for conducting investigation and assessment. The DH will provide the case to the Expert Committee on Clinical Events Assessment Following COVID-19 Immunization for conducting causality assessment, and the assessment result will be released in a timely manner.

According to the product information of the vaccine, patients with uncontrolled severe chronic diseases should not be given the vaccine. For patients with acute diseases, acute exacerbation of chronic diseases, severe chronic diseases, atopy and fever, the vaccine should be used with caution; if necessary, delay vaccination after doctor's evaluation, a DH spokesman urged.

As a whole population, people with acute medical conditions with various severity are admitted to the hospitals every day. With the commencement of the vaccination programme, among those patients with acute medical conditions, there will be those that have received vaccines and reports of such cases might increase with the increasing vaccination uptakes. It is important for the surveillance system in place to monitor these adverse events following COVID-19 vaccination and to conduct causality assessments based on scientific and objective approach to ensure that any untoward outcome would not go unnoticed, the spokesman added.

According to the mortality rates in Hong Kong, on average 10.2 persons, 8.1 persons and 1.4 persons passed away every day respectively due to ischemic heart diseases, cerebrovascular diseases and diabetes in 2019. In addition, according to the information of the HA, in 2020, the number of hospital admission due to myocardial infarction was about 7 300 cases; and the number of hospital admission due to acute ischemic stroke was about 10

300 cases. People with chronic illness should seek medical attention if they feel unwell. They should also adhere to their treatment as prescribed by their doctors.