

DH received one report of serious adverse event relating to COVID-19 vaccination

The Department of Health (DH) announced that as of 4 pm today (March 13), one report was received from the Hospital Authority (HA) in the past 24 hours regarding a case admitted to the intensive care unit (ICU) with suspected serious adverse event following COVID-19 vaccination.

According to the information provided by the HA, the case involved a 63-year-old man who has history of atrial fibrillation, congestive heart failure, polycythemia, and alcoholic fatty liver. He started to have generalised malaise on March 10. Today, his general condition decreased and he attended the Accident and Emergency Department of North District Hospital. He was subsequently transferred to the ICU for further treatment with provisional diagnosis of acute stroke. He is now in critical condition. According to information, he received a dose of CoronaVac COVID-19 vaccination at Yuen Wo Road Sports Centre Community Vaccination Centre in Sha Tin four days before admission (March 9) and there was no record that the man complained of feeling unwell during observation at the Vaccination Centre.

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

According to the World Health Organization, Adverse Events Following Immunisation refers to any untoward medical occurrence which follows immunisation and which does not necessarily have a causal relationship with the usage of the vaccine. 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.

According to the information of the HA, in 2020, the provisional number of hospital admission due to myocardial infarction and acute ischemic stroke was about 7 300 cases and 10 300 cases respectively. People with chronic illness should seek medical attention if they feel unwell. They should also adhere to their treatment as prescribed by their doctors.

Separately, the HA informed the DH today regarding a case announced on March 7 of a 80-year-old male, who received treatment in the ICU of the Caritas Medical Centre and subsequently transferred to the Princess Margaret Hospital for further treatment, had passed away this afternoon due to ischaemic bowel disease. In addition, a case announced on March 11 of a 67-year-old male who received treatment in the ICU of the Kwong Wah Hospital had passed away this afternoon.