

Director of Health observes school outreach vaccination activity (with photos)

The Director of Health, Dr Constance Chan, and the Controller of the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH), Dr Wong Ka-hing, visited Po Leung Kuk Camões Tan Siu Lin Primary School in Yau Ma Tei this morning (December 13) to observe the school outreach vaccination service arranged by the Government.

The primary school has participated in the 2019/20 Seasonal Influenza Vaccination School Outreach (Free of Charge) – Primary Schools (Primary School Outreach) and the DH arranged for a Public-Private-Partnership (PPP) Team to provide vaccinations for schoolchildren at school. Parents of over 600 pupils consented to having their children receive vaccinations at the school, with the figure representing over 65 per cent of the total number of pupils of the school. This was a second dose vaccination activity, providing vaccinations for those students who were less than nine years old and had never had a seasonal influenza vaccination (SIV) before this season.

Dr Chan said she was pleased to learn that the vaccination programme has been well received by schools and parents, and added, "In 2018-19, the DH has launched the School Outreach Vaccination Pilot Programme to provide an SIV to students at primary schools through the Government Outreach Teams or the PPP Teams. The outcome has been positive. To further enhance the vaccination rate of schoolchildren, the DH has regularised the programme this season so as to cover more primary schools, and has also extended the coverage to kindergartens and child care centres as a pilot."

So far, about 430 primary schools and around 710 kindergartens/child care centres have enrolled in this free-of-charge school outreach vaccination programme, representing about 65 per cent of the schools concerned across the territory.

Dr Chan viewed the onsite arrangement of the vaccination service for schoolchildren by the PPP Team and the procurement and delivery arrangement of vaccines by the DH. She said that she was delighted with the smooth outreach vaccination service and looked forward to the continuous and full support from schools and parents as home-school co-operation has been of vital importance in enhancing vaccination coverage.

For eligible children who will not receive an SIV through school outreach vaccinations, parents can arrange for subsidised vaccinations for their children in clinics of private doctors enrolled in the Vaccination Subsidy Scheme (VSS). Other eligible persons can also receive subsidised or free SIVs through the VSS and the Government Vaccination Programme (GVP) respectively.

Dr Wong pointed out that influenza vaccines are safe and effective and that all persons aged 6 months or above, except those with known contraindications, are recommended to receive SIVs for personal protection. Furthermore, vaccinations among family members is crucial in protecting their personal and family health.

The winter influenza season usually starts in January every year, yet the exact time of arrival cannot be predicted. As it takes about two weeks to develop antibodies after vaccination, Dr Wong called on members of the public to receive an SIV early.

Dr Wong said, "Besides high-risk groups such as the elderly, people aged 50 to 64, children and immunocompromised patients, healthy people may also contract influenza and develop complications. Noting that the vaccination rate among people aged 50 to 64 is lower compared with other groups, we appeal to those in that age group to receive an SIV early via the VSS to safeguard the health of themselves and their families."

The various vaccination programmes have already been launched in October. As of December 8, 2019, about 376 700 doses of seasonal influenza vaccines had been administered via the GVP and 334 800 doses via the VSS. In addition, about 157 000 and 63 600 doses of seasonal influenza vaccines had been administered via the two outreach vaccination programmes conducted in some 400 primary schools and 650 kindergartens/child care centres respectively. The total number of doses administered by the above programmes was about 932 100, representing an increase of about 8.1 per cent over the same period in the 2018/19 season.

Members of the public may call the CHP's hotline (2125 2125) for enquiries during office hours or visit the [Vaccination Schemes page](#) for more information on the vaccination programmes.



