

Government responds to media enquiries on COVID-19 vaccine procurement

Following the government's announcement yesterday (December 11) on the latest development of COVID-19 vaccine procurement, a spokesman for the Food and Health Bureau today (December 12) provided the following information in response to media enquiries.

The Government has reached an agreement with Fosun Pharma to procure a maximum of 7.5 million doses of the mRNA vaccine (BNT162b2) developed by Fosun Pharma in collaboration with the German drug manufacturer BioNTech. The vaccines supplied to Hong Kong will be manufactured in Europe. The first batch of one million doses is expected to be delivered in the first quarter of 2021 the earliest.

Regarding the arrangements for the procurement agreement, Fosun Pharma is the strategic partner of BioNTech in China. The two companies will work jointly on the development and commercialisation of the mRNA COVID-19 vaccine, developed based on BioNTech's proprietary mRNA technology platform, in Mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan. Under the terms of the agreement, for the purposes of development and commercialisation of the vaccine, Fosun Pharma Industrial will be responsible for clinical trials, regulatory applications as well as sales and marketing of the product in China. BioNTech will provide technical resources and pre-clinical research information necessary for making clinical trial applications and to facilitate the trials in the region. It will also provide the necessary products for the purposes of clinical trials as well as marketing and sales.

Currently, the BNT162b2 mRNA vaccine developed by BioNTech has been approved for emergency use by the health authorities of the United Kingdom and Canada. (Note: Pfizer is BioNTech's collaboration partner for the mRNA vaccine in regions other than China).

As regards the vaccine provided by Sinovac Biotech (Hong Kong) Limited (Sinovac) to Hong Kong, according to information provided by Sinovac, the relevant vaccine will be produced in Daxing District, Beijing. The first batch of one million doses is expected to be delivered to Hong Kong in January 2021 the earliest.

The SAR Government will also be obtaining 7.5 million doses of the vaccine developed by AstraZeneca in collaboration with the University of Oxford. The relevant vaccines are expected to start arriving in Hong Kong by batches by the end of the second quarter of 2021 the earliest. In view of the confidentiality agreement signed between the SAR Government and AstraZeneca, the manufacturing place of the relevant vaccine cannot be disclosed at this stage.

"The Government will continue to negotiate advance purchase agreements

with other vaccine developers and strive to provide sufficient supplies of vaccines which are proven to be safe and effective for the Hong Kong population as early as possible. After the relevant vaccines obtain approval from the Government, arrangement will be made for the public to receive vaccination as soon as possible." the spokesman added.