

HA commences seasonal influenza vaccination programme

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

Public hospitals and outpatient clinics of the Hospital Authority (HA) will start providing seasonal influenza vaccinations to eligible persons starting from next Thursday (September 26) to dovetail with the Government Vaccination Programme 2024/25.

Under the Government Vaccination Programme 2024/25, the HA will mainly provide seasonal influenza vaccinations to eligible patients with regular attendance to public hospitals and outpatient clinics, including:

- chronic disease patients with regular appointments aged 2 to under 18 and 50 or above;
- expectant mothers undergoing an antenatal checkup; and
- identified persons with an intellectual disability, or disabled and chronic disease patients receiving Comprehensive Social Security Assistance aged between 18 to 49.

The list of public hospitals and outpatient clinics providing vaccinations is set out in the Annex.

Eligible patients may receive vaccinations at the time of their scheduled follow-up appointments at clinics. Patients with a distant follow-up appointment date may visit or contact the respective clinics for necessary arrangements.

The Chief Infection Control Officer of the HA, Dr Raymond Lai, appealed to members of the public to receive vaccinations early. "High-risk individuals such as chronic disease patients, the elderly and children, and even healthy people, may develop severe complications after an influenza infection, leading to serious illness or death. As Hong Kong is about to enter winter, the risk of influenza transmission increases. Vaccinations can enhance immunity against influenza and greatly reduce the risk of serious illness or death from infection. Protection will develop in about two to four weeks after inoculation and last for at least six months, which would protect members of the public during the winter influenza season."

According to the recommendations from the Centre for Health Protection, COVID-19 vaccines can be administered at the same time with other vaccines, including seasonal influenza vaccines. General Outpatient Clinics (GOPCs) will provide both COVID-19 and influenza vaccinations for eligible patients while medical staff will offer advice based on their vaccination history.

In addition, poultry workers, pig farmers and people who are involved in the pig-slaughtering industry, as referred by relevant government

departments, can also receive seasonal influenza vaccination in selected GOPCs starting from October 17 (Thursday).

Members of the public can enquire about the details of this year's seasonal influenza vaccination programme at the respective specialist outpatient clinics or GOPCs they are attending, or make enquiries on the HA hotline 2300 6555 during office hours.