

SCS on vaccination programme

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Secretary for the Civil Service, Mr Patrick Nip, at a media session after attending a radio programme this morning (February 20):

Reporter: Do we have to get to zero infection before we can communicate with the Mainland authorities about resuming the cross-boundary travel? And do we have the details as to how many doses will be available at the community centres because you said mainly the doses will be administered at private clinics?

Secretary for the Civil Service: As regards the first question, it is important that we need discussions with the Mainland authorities. It is important to have an exchange of views and suggestions between the two sides because both of us are also very concerned about our respective epidemic situations, and the number one priority is to get our epidemic under control, having no further outbreak etc. We will continue our engagement with the Mainland authorities and we hope that, of course just like everyone, we want to see cross-boundary travel as early as possible. But we have to do our job well first.

As regards the vaccination of Sinovac vaccine, the majority of the vaccination would be through private doctors and clinics. Before mid-March, more than 1 000 or up to 1 500 private clinics would be participating in the vaccination programme. So people who want to get vaccinated can contact their doctors and get vaccinated at their clinics. No central booking is required. They can also get the vaccination at the five community vaccination centres starting from next Friday, and the online booking will start on Tuesday.

We would launch the vaccination programme gradually and in phases. At first, there may not be in full capacity because we want to get the work flow smooth, and healthcare workers engaged in the inoculation get used to it. And also the public know about the procedures including each and every step, the documents they need to bring, and the points to note after vaccination, etc. We will do it as quickly as possible but at the same time in an orderly and safe manner, and will encourage more people to get vaccinated.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript)