

SCS speaks on COVID-19 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 (July 18):

Reporter: Will the Government extend the Community Vaccination Centre given that it may need another month for the herd immunity to be achieved? Secondly, would you actually still consider Sinovac as part of your herd immunity vaccination given that some nearby countries are already not considering.....

Secretary for the Civil Service: Firstly, both Sinovac and BioNTech vaccines are approved by our health authority for emergency use, and both Sinovac and BioNTech are also on the list of the World Health Organization for emergency use. So it's very clear that both vaccines are safe, with the efficacy and also with the quality. Our objective is to appeal to the public to have your jabs completed as soon as possible. I hope that the public would get their first dose before end of August so that we can achieve the vaccination rate of 70 per cent of our eligible population as early as possible because it is very essential for our community to return to normal, for cross-boundary travel to other places.

Our objective is to achieve the 70 per cent of our eligible population getting vaccinated as early as possible. We would closely monitor the booking and also the vaccination situation in the next two weeks. And then we would decide the way forward including whether any adjustments need to be made to the vaccination arrangements. But it's very clear that the community vaccination centre cannot be operated for a very long time because it has been in operation for more than 140 days, 7 days a week, from 8am to 8pm. So we would critically review the situation in light of the actual vaccination situation. But these are for the government to worry about and to work on. For the public, I think the important message is to get your jab as early as possible, and especially for the elderly, because for the elderly population, aged 60 and above, the present vaccination rate is just around 25 per cent. It's very low and it puts our elderly at risk should there be another wave of outbreak in the community. So I hope that by now, people know about the safety of the vaccines, know about the data and also the large amount of vaccines already administered throughout the world. So that are the key messages we want the public know about. Thank you very much.

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