

SFH observes School Outreach Vaccination Pilot Programme vaccination activity (with photos)

The Secretary for Food and Health, Professor Sophia Chan, and the Controller of the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH), Dr Wong Ka-hing, this morning (November 5) visited Maryknoll Fathers' School (Primary Section) in Sham Shui Po to observe the outreach vaccination arrangements under the School Outreach Vaccination Pilot Programme.

Professor Chan said, "The winter influenza peak usually occurs during January to March or April every year in Hong Kong. Besides high-risk groups such as the elderly, children and immunocompromised patients, healthy people may also contract influenza and develop complications. Seasonal influenza vaccination (SIV) is one of the safe and effective means to prevent seasonal influenza and its complications.

"To increase the SIV uptake rate among primary school children, the DH introduced the School Outreach Vaccination Pilot Programme this year to reach out to 184 primary schools and provide SIV to their students through a Government Outreach Team or a Public-Private-Partnership (PPP) Team. As of November 1, 2018, over 16 000 doses of seasonal influenza vaccines had been administered via the School Outreach Vaccination Pilot Programme in 31 schools.

Under the pilot scheme, the DH arranged for a PPP Team to provide outreach vaccination today at the primary school that Professor Chan visited. Some 480 pupils consented to receive SIV at the school, representing around 70 per cent of the total number of pupils.

She learnt that the DH's procurement and delivery of vaccines for the PPP teams have been smooth under the pilot scheme. The DH also arranges to collect unused vaccines and clinical waste, as well as provides administrative support. A total of 36 doctors were recruited to participate in the PPP. An injection fee of \$70 per dose is provided to the PPP doctors.

Professor Chan added, "The DH also encourages primary schools, kindergartens and child care centres (KGs/CCCs) not participating in the pilot programme to arrange outreach vaccination for their students through the Enhanced Vaccination Subsidy Scheme (VSS) Outreach Vaccination. As of end-October, 2018, a total of 69 primary schools and 73 KGs/CCCs notified the DH that they would arrange outreach vaccination via the Enhanced VSS programme. In addition, eligible persons can also receive subsidised or free SIV vaccination via the VSS and the Government Vaccination Programme (GVP) respectively."

As of November 1, 2018, around 25 000 doses had been administered via the Enhanced VSS Outreach Vaccination. Meanwhile, over 87 000 doses of seasonal influenza vaccines had been administered via the GVP and over 174 000 doses via the VSS (including the Enhanced VSS Outreach Vaccination), representing increases of 21 per cent and 54 per cent respectively from the same period in the 2017/18 season.

