

Subsidy increased for doctors providing vaccination to elderly under the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme

As the risk of severe illness from COVID-19 increases with age, COVID-19 vaccination is strongly recommended for the elderly worldwide. As at July 15 2021, the percentage of those aged 60 or above in Hong Kong with one dose of COVID-19 vaccines administered is only around 26 per cent, which is far from satisfactory.

To further facilitate COVID-19 vaccination for the elderly, the Government announced that with effect from today (July 16), an additional subsidy of \$50 per dose of COVID-19 vaccine given to elderly aged 60 or above will be provided to doctors enrolled under the Vaccination Subsidy Scheme and Residential Vaccination Programme of the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme.

A Government spokesman said, "According to the latest recommendation on COVID-19 vaccination by the Scientific Committee on Vaccine Preventable Diseases and the Scientific Committee on Emerging and Zoonotic Diseases under the Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health, and the Chief Executive's expert advisory panel (JSC-EAP), elderly is the group with the highest risks of complication and death from COVID-19. COVID-19 vaccines are highly recommended for the elderly for protection against infection."

Experts from the JSC-EAP recommended that elderly who have received influenza vaccines before can safely receive COVID-19 vaccines in view of the extensive experience of using influenza vaccine among the elderly and its success in preventing influenza complications and outbreaks in residential care homes for the elderly.

Elderlies are encouraged to receive COVID-19 vaccination early, the spokesman added. Outreach vaccination service or vaccination by visiting medical officers are provided to residential care homes and nursing homes. Details can be found at the designated website (www.covidvaccine.gov.hk/en/).