

Transcript of remarks by SFH at media session

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Secretary for Food and Health, Professor Sophia Chan, at a media session after attending a radio programme this morning (November 3):

Reporter: (about flu jab)

Secretary for Food and Health: The Department of Health has anticipated that there will be more people taking flu jabs in this flu season. Therefore, they have already purchased more than 750 000 doses of flu vaccines in anticipation of the increased number. So far, the situation of people taking flu vaccination has been so far so good. As far as the new School Outreach Vaccination Pilot Programme is concerned, there are already 16 000 doses of flu vaccination have been given to children involving 31 schools. As for the Government Vaccination Programme, a total of 87 000 doses of flu jabs have been given. If we compare with last year, there is an increase of over 20 percent. As regards the Vaccination Subsidy Scheme, that provides subsidies for the private practitioners so people can take flu jabs at the GPs (General Practitioners), a total of 174 000 doses of vaccination have been given. Counting all these together, a total amount of 277 000 doses of flu jabs have been given, so there is an increase as compared with last year. On the one hand, we will continue to do more publicity and education. On the other hand, we believe probably public awareness has been improved in preventing seasonal flu. I think this is a good news. The Centre for Health Protection is monitoring the development of different flu viruses as well as the flu situation. Other measures include those to be implemented by the Hospital Authority. They have been preparing for the flu season and also the height of the flu season which is coming in the winter. At the Food and Health Bureau level, we have provided resources for the two universities, the University of Hong Kong and the Chinese University of Hong Kong, to do more research on flu vaccination, so that we can have more local data to support the work that we are doing.

Reporters: Will the government buy more flu jabs?

Secretary for Food and Health: In fact the 750 000 doses of flu jabs have already been an increase as compared with last year. We will continue to monitor the situation. In case there is not enough, we will work to see if we can buy more.

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