

Transcript of remarks by SFH at media session

Following is the transcript of remarks made by the Secretary for Food and Health, Professor Sophia Chan, after attending a radio programme today (March 6):

Reporter: We see the fall in the number of people signing up to get vaccinated. Do you think it is related to the incident of the death of 63-year-old man? How would you convince people to take COVID-19 jab given this incident? Would you recommend them to wait a little bit?

Secretary for Food and Health: Thank you for your question. First of all, I think the Expert Committee (Expert Committee on Clinical Events Assessment Following COVID-19 Immunisation) has already announced that they have so far not found any direct causality between the current incident and the vaccination. It will be under the inquest by the Coroner's Court. Therefore, after the report has come out, the Committee will meet again to review the report and give more information. Obviously, all two vaccines that the Government have authorised for emergency use are safe, efficacious and also of good quality.

With this incident, we also noticed the number of booking has lowered down a little bit. There are still bookings every day. We understand the situation. Perhaps the public would like to understand their own situation a little bit more. We also appeal to the public that if they are uncertain about their own situation whether they have serious chronic illness or uncontrolled chronic illness, they can actually consult their family doctors to understand more before they make booking for vaccination. As far as the Government is concerned, we will continue to monitor the overall situation. If there is an incident, the healthcare professionals will notify the Department of Health. In the centres, we will continue to monitor the situation and all people who have been vaccinated would have to wait at the centres for observation for 30 minutes before they can leave. If they have any adverse reactions during that time, there are healthcare professionals on site who will deal with the situation. We will continue to provide health education or information about the vaccines so that the people would gain confidence and understand more about whether or not they should be vaccinated. Of course, as far as the public health is concerned, the more people get vaccinated, the better it is in terms of control of the epidemic as well as people's livelihood to be resumed as soon as possible.

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