

Transcript of remarks by SLW on unemployment rate and vaccination for elderly

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Dr Law Chi-kwong, on unemployment rate and vaccination for the elderly people after attending a radio programme this morning (July 24):

Reporter: You said during the radio programme that you are optimistic in the unemployment rate to go further down next month. Can you tell us why you are so optimistic? Secondly, about the vaccination rate for elderly people living in care homes, does the Government have any plans to send out more outreach teams to get them vaccinated, since the rate is so low right now?

Secretary for Labour and Welfare: Looking at all the indicators, including economic indicators and our labour market situation, such as jobs available, people looking for jobs, etc, the trend is definitely telling us that it's going down, in terms of the unemployment rate. But how fast it will go down is something that we can't really predict, but the trend is going down.

As to the question related to vaccination in our residential care homes (RCHs), particularly for those in residential care homes for the elderly, we have started the first round (of Outreach Vaccination Arrangement for RCHs under COVID-19 Vaccination Programme) a couple of months ago, but at that time because of the lack of information and difficulty in making decisions, the vaccination rate is a bit too low we must say. We have just started another round, providing more information, simpler information, telling people that if they have been receiving seasonal influenza vaccination all the time, now they can use this COVID-19 vaccine. So, we hope that the simplified message would help people to make up their mind for vaccination. In terms of the outreach work, primarily because in the past when we were doing the seasonal influenza vaccination, we had a vaccination rate between 70 to 80 per cent and they were primarily conducted by doctors in private practice. We have secured sufficient support from them and we hope that in the coming round of vaccination, there will be more people willing to participate and they can get a job.

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