

Update on monitoring COVID-19 vaccination

â€œIn the preceding week till 11.59pm on July 18, the Department of Health (DH) received 156 reports (Note 1) of adverse events following COVID-19 immunisation. No death case was reported by the Hospital Authority (HA) involving individuals who had received vaccines within 14 days before they passed away and had potential association with vaccination.

As at 8pm on July 18, over 4.82 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines had been administered for members of the public. Around 2.82 million people had received at least one dose of vaccine, accounting for 41.4 per cent of the population aged 12 or above. The DH received 4 361 reports (Note 1) of adverse events (0.09 per cent of the total vaccine doses administered). Among the death cases concerning persons who had been vaccinated, including 26 cases (Note 2) with vaccination within 14 days before they passed away (0.0005 per cent of the total vaccine doses administered), none of the death cases was associated with vaccination.

As at July 18, the Expert Committee on Clinical Events Assessment Following COVID-19 Immunisation had concluded that 13 death cases had no causal relationship with vaccination, and preliminarily considered that 10 cases were not associated with vaccination. The three remaining cases were pending assessment. The Expert Committee considered that there is no unusual pattern identified so far, and will continue to closely monitor the relevant situation and collect data for assessment.

According to information from the HA, during the period from June 21 to July 18, the ratio of death cases out of those without a vaccination record was 70.7 cases for every 100 000 people, whereas the ratio of death cases for those with a vaccination record was 2.7 cases for every 100 000 people. The overall death rate is similar to that recorded in the past three years. Out of those without a vaccination record, the ratio of death cases with acute stroke or acute myocardial infarction was 3.9 cases for every 100 000 people, whereas the ratio of death cases under the same category for those with a vaccination record was 0.3 cases for every 100 000 people. Furthermore, the ratio of miscarriage cases out of those without a vaccination record was 26.8 cases for every 100 000 people, whereas the ratio of miscarriage cases for those who had a vaccination record was 4.2 cases for every 100 000 people. Based on the statistical analysis of the above figures, there is no evidence that vaccination increases the risk of death or miscarriage for recipients. The relevant reference statistics will be uploaded to the thematic website for the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme.

The majority of non-death cases of adverse events received so far are relatively minor cases. The relevant details can be found in the "Report on the Safety Monitoring of COVID-19 Vaccines in Hong Kong" (www.drugoffice.gov.hk/eps/do/en/doc/Safety_Monitoring_of_COVID-19_Vaccines_in_Hong_Kong.pdf).

Note 1: Provisional figures. During the same period, the DH received a report of suspected myocarditis involving a 15-year-old male after receiving COVID-19 vaccine. He experienced chest pains two days after receiving the second dose of Comirnaty vaccine. His condition is stable. The relevant report was announced on July 20 via a press release in response to media enquiries.

Note 2: In the preceding week till 11.59pm on July 18, the DH received a death report involving an individual who had received COVID-19 vaccines within 14 days before passing away. It involved a 50-year-old male in a Coroner's case handled by the public mortuary. He had previously received the Comirnaty vaccine, but there is no clinical evidence that the incident arose from vaccination. The preliminary autopsy revealed that the cause of death could potentially be acute intoxication or ischaemic heart disease.