Update on monitoring COVID-19 vaccination

In the preceding week till 11.59pm on November 28, the Department of Health (DH) received 37 reports (Note) 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 November 28, around 9.41 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines had been administered for members of the public. Around 4.74 million people had received at least one dose of vaccine, accounting for 70.4 per cent of the population aged 12 or above. The DH received 6 426 reports (Note) of adverse events (0.07 per cent of the total vaccine doses administered). Among the death cases concerning persons who had been vaccinated, including 48 cases 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 November 28, the Expert Committee on Clinical Events Assessment Following COVID-19 Immunisation had concluded that 29 death cases had no causal relationship with vaccination, and preliminarily considered that 18 cases were not associated with vaccination. One case is still pending further information for 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 November 1 to November 28, the ratio of death cases out of those without a vaccination record was 124.7 cases for every 100 000 people, whereas the ratio of death cases for those with a vaccination record was 6.6 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 6.1 cases for every 100 000 people, whereas the ratio of death cases under the same category for those with a vaccination record was 0.8 cases for every 100 000 people. Furthermore, the ratio of miscarriage cases out of those without a vaccination record was 34.2 cases for every 100 000 people, whereas the ratio of miscarriage cases for those who had a vaccination record was 13.3 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_i

n_Hong_Kong.pdf).

"The COVID-19 vaccination rate for the elderly aged 80 or above in Hong Kong is only 18 per cent at present, meaning that around 82 per cent of the elderly in that age group are in a dangerous situation, which is alarming. The Comirnaty and CoronaVac vaccines are highly effective in preventing severe cases and deaths from COVID-19. They can provide effective protection to those vaccinated in preventing serious complications and even deaths after infection. The Government continues to call on persons who are not yet vaccinated, especially senior citizens, chronic patients and other immunocompromised persons who face a much higher chance of death after COVID-19 infection, to get vaccinated as early as possible for better self-protection before the fifth wave strikes Hong Kong," a Government spokesman said.

Note: Provisional figures. In the preceding week till 11.59pm on November 28, the DH did not receive any reports of suspected myocarditis or pericarditis involving adolescents aged 12 to 15.