

Update on monitoring COVID-19 vaccination

In the preceding week till 11.59pm on July 4, the Department of Health (DH) received 152 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 4, over 3.96 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines had been administered for members of the public. Around 2.37 million people had received at least one dose of vaccine, accounting for 34.8 per cent of the population aged 12 or above. The DH received 4 079 reports (Note 1) of adverse events (0.10 per cent of the total vaccine doses administered). Among the death cases concerning persons who had been vaccinated, including 23 cases (Note 2) with vaccination within 14 days before they passed away (0.0006 per cent of the total vaccine doses administered), none of the death cases was associated with vaccination.

On July 5, the Expert Committee on Clinical Events Assessment Following COVID-19 Immunisation (the Expert Committee) (Note 3) convened a regular meeting. The Expert Committee had concluded that 13 death cases had no causal relationship with vaccination, and preliminarily considered that 10 cases were not associated with vaccination. 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 7 to July 4, the ratio of death cases out of those without a vaccination record was 66.0 cases for every 100 000 people, whereas the ratio of death cases for those with a vaccination record was 3.0 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 3.8 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 23.7 cases for every 100 000 people, whereas the ratio of miscarriage cases for those who had a vaccination record was 4.9 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

Note 2: In the preceding week till 11.59pm on July 4, the DH received one death report involving an individual who had received COVID-19 vaccine within 14 days before passing away. The case involved a 41-year-old male who had received the Sinovac COVID-19 vaccine. There is no clinical evidence that the incident arose from vaccination. According to clinical information and preliminary autopsy findings, the cause of death is ischemic heart disease. The Expert Committee preliminarily considered the case to be not associated with vaccination.

Note 3: The Expert Committee performs continuous monitoring of the possible adverse events following administration of COVID-19 vaccines, and provides professional views and suggestions on safety monitoring of the authorised COVID-19 vaccines. The membership list and the key functions of the Expert Committee can be found at the following website: www.covidvaccine.gov.hk/en/expert.