

Information Paper

**The 2021/22 Vaccination Subsidy Scheme, Government Vaccination Programme,  
Residential Care Home Vaccination Programme  
and Seasonal Influenza Vaccination (SIV) School Outreach (Free-of-charge)**

**Aim**

1. This paper summarizes the arrangement of the seasonal influenza vaccination (SIV) and pneumococcal vaccination under Government's various vaccination programmes/ scheme in 2021/22 season for District Councils (DC)'s information.
2. The various vaccination programmes/ scheme in 2021/22 season will be launched on 6 October 2021 to provide free or subsidised SIV and/ or pneumococcal vaccination to eligible persons to enhance their immunity against influenza and pneumococcal infection, reduce the risk of infection and related complications.
3. World Health Organisation has recommended older adults as one of the highest priority groups to receive SIV during the COVID-19 pandemic.
4. District Councils (DC)'s continuous support is highly crucial, in particular, to encourage persons of age 50 years or above in the community to receive SIV for prevention of getting influenza and COVID-19 at the same time.

**Background**

5. SIV is a safe and effective means to prevent seasonal influenza and its complications. A person getting influenza and COVID-19 at the same time may be more seriously ill and has higher death rate. Influenza vaccination may reduce hospitalisation and length of stay. It is important to receive both SIV and COVID-19 vaccination.
6. The outcomes of invasive pneumococcal diseases are usually more severe among elderly. Pneumococcal vaccination is one of the most effective means of preventing pneumococcal diseases. The Government has been providing free or subsidised 23-valent pneumococcal polysaccharide vaccine (23vPPV) and 13-valent pneumococcal conjugate vaccine (PCV13) to eligible elderly.
7. A total of over 1.32 million doses of SIV were administered under Government's various vaccination programmes/ scheme in 2020/21. It was a 5% decrease when

compared with 2019/20. The main decrease was noted in the student groups, which showed a 25% decrease in doses. It is believed to be caused by social distancing measures and school suspensions during the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, around 70 000 doses of pneumococcal vaccines were administered to elderly under Government's various vaccination programmes/ scheme in 2020/21.

## **Various Vaccination Programmes/ Scheme in 2021/22**

### *Vaccination Subsidy Scheme (VSS) – will be launched on 6 October 2021*

8. Eligible groups for subsidised SIV include Hong Kong residents of the following groups: persons of age 50 or above, pregnant women, children of age 6 months to less than 12 years (or primary school students), persons with intellectual disability, persons receiving disability allowance and recipients of standard rate of “100% disabled” or “requiring constant attendance” under the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance Scheme. Eligible groups for subsidised pneumococcal vaccination include Hong Kong residents of age 65 or above. Please find details in **Annex 1** and **Annex 3**.
9. Eligible persons can search the list of enrolled doctors and information about extra charge from the eHealth System (Subsidies) website (<https://apps.hcv.gov.hk/Public/en/SPS/Search>) (to be updated on 23 Sep 2021) and contact the chosen doctors/ clinics to arrange vaccination. Subsidy levels are HK\$240 per dose of SIV, HK\$300 per dose of 23vPPV and HK\$760 per dose of PCV13. Doctors may impose extra charge but some doctors will not charge any fee. Elderly persons can use health care vouchers for payments if the doctor has also joined the Elderly Health Care Voucher Scheme.

### *Government Vaccination Programme (GVP) – will be launched on 6 Oct 2021*

10. Eligible groups remain the same as in 2020/21. Eligible persons can receive free SIV and/ or pneumococcal vaccination at designated clinics of Hospital Authority (HA) and Department of Health (DH). Please find details in **Annex 2** and **Annex 3**.

### *Residential Care Home Vaccination Programme (RVP) – will be launched on 6 Oct 2021*

11. Eligible persons can receive free SIV and/ or pneumococcal vaccination at residential care homes for the elderly (RCHE), residential care homes for the disabled (RCHD), residential child care centres (RCCC) and designated

institutions serving persons with intellectual disability. These homes/ institutions/ centres under RVP will arrange visiting doctors to provide vaccination. The reimbursement to doctors will be HK\$100 per dose. Please refer to **Annex 2** and **Annex 3** for details.

*SIV School Outreach (Free-of-charge) - will be launched on 6 Oct 2021 for kindergartens (KG) and child care centers (CCC); and 13 Oct 2021 for primary schools*

12. To increase SIV uptake rate amongst school children, DH will continue to implement the SIV School Outreach (Free-of-charge) programme for all primary schools, KGs, KG-cum-CCC and CCCs. The vaccines will be provided by the DH and a subsidy will be provided to the doctors at HK\$100 per dose.
13. Schools that will not join SIV School Outreach (Free-of-charge) can join VSS School Outreach (Extra-charge-allowed). The subsidy is HK\$240 per dose. Doctors may impose extra charge but some doctors will not charge any fee.

#### **Arrange Outreach Vaccination Activities through Vaccination Subsidy Scheme**

14. District Offices and community organisations planning to organise outreach vaccination activities in their venues can select doctors from the list at the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) website (<https://www.chp.gov.hk/en/features/46428.html>), and study the “Guideline on how to arrange Vaccination Activity at Non-clinic Settings” (**Annex 4**) at the CHP website for helping organisers to arrange outreach vaccination activities.
15. CHP also prepared the “VSS Doctors' Guide 2021/22” for doctors’ reference on vaccination procedures, proper vaccine storage, cold chain management, infection control practices and disposal of clinical waste to ensure safety and quality of outreach vaccination.
16. To prevent COVID-19, social distancing measures implemented at that time (<https://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/reduce-gatherings.html>) should be observed. All participants should wear a mask, check body temperature, practice hand hygiene and keep appropriate distance.
17. The venue for vaccination should be kept well ventilated; and should be cleaned and disinfected after every session of vaccination activity, with 1 in 99 diluted household bleach (mixing 1 part of household bleach containing 5.25% sodium hypochlorite with 99 parts of water), left for 15-30 minutes, and then rinsed with

water and wiped dry. For metallic surface, disinfect with 70% alcohol.

### **Vaccination Period**

18. As it takes about 2 weeks after influenza vaccination for antibodies to develop in the body to protect against influenza virus, members of the public are encouraged to get vaccinated as soon as possible for protection during the influenza season.
19. It is necessary to receive SIV every year because the circulating seasonal influenza virus strains may change from time to time and the composition of vaccine is updated every year to enhance protection. The immunity built up after vaccination in the last season will decrease and may become too low to provide protection in the next season.
20. For pneumococcal vaccination, there is no special vaccination period. Elderly who have not yet received vaccination should get vaccinated early. The free/subsidised vaccination programmes/ scheme will continue throughout the year.

### **Publicity and Information**

21. All along, DH has close liaison with working partners and stakeholders, including HA, Social Welfare Department, Education Bureau, schools, institutions serving persons with intellectual disability, RCHE, RCHD, RCCC, and healthcare sector.
22. Publicity activities are conducted through a multi-pronged approach for 2021/22 season. Announcement videos on SIV and on pneumococcal vaccination will be broadcast in TV and radio. Other publicity include KOL video broadcast in clinics, advertisements in social media, newspapers and public transport, etc.
23. DH has uploaded the information about vaccination programmes/ scheme onto CHP website: (<https://www.chp.gov.hk/en/features/17980.html>). The Programme Management and Vaccination Division of the Department of Health operates an enquiry line (2125 2125) for public enquiry.

**Department of Health**

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