



1. Introduction

1.1 What is Elderly Vaccination Subsidy Scheme?

The Elderly Vaccination Subsidy Scheme (EVSS), administered by the Department of Health (DH) provides incentive to facilitate Hong Kong elderly aged 65 years or above to get vaccinations from private medical doctors enrolled in the scheme. This vaccination subsidy scheme for elders covers pneumococcal and seasonal influenza vaccinations. Under EVSS in 2014/15, the Government will subsidise eligible elders **\$160 per dose of seasonal influenza vaccination** and **\$190 per dose of pneumococcal vaccination*** given (see Section 1.3). The subsidy is reimbursed by the DH to private doctors joining EVSS. The scientific basis of EVSS comes from the Scientific Committee on Vaccine Preventable Diseases (SCVPD) under the Centre for Health Protection (CHP).

[Note: 23-valent pneumococcal polysaccharide vaccine is included in the scope of subsidized pneumococcal vaccination under EVSS.]

a) Seasonal influenza vaccine:-

Seasonal influenza vaccination is recommended for elderly persons because of their high risk of complications and excess hospital admissions and death from influenza. The SCVPD recommendation can be viewed at this link:

http://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/recommendations_on_seasonal_influenza_vaccination_for_the_201415_season_july_2014.pdf

Influenza occurs in Hong Kong throughout the year, but is usually more common in periods from January to March and from July to August. As the influenza vaccine composition is updated every year and the immunity built up in a vaccinated person in the prior season may become too low to provide protection in the next season, it is recommended to receive seasonal influenza vaccination every year.

Private doctors can enrol in EVSS at any time. However, subsidy for the seasonal influenza vaccination will only be available for eligible elders from 6 October 2014 onwards when EVSS 2014/15 starts. Elders are advised to receive seasonal influenza vaccination as soon as the vaccines become available.



b) Pneumococcal vaccine:-

For elders 65 years of age and older, SCVPD recommends either a single dose of PCV13 or a single dose of 23vPPV. The SCVPD will review the recommendation of pneumococcal vaccination again as more scientific evidence is expected to be available in 2015.

The SCVPD recommendation can be viewed at this link:
http://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/updated_recommendations_on_the_use_of_pneumococcal_vaccines_for_high-risk_individuals.pdf

Subsidy for pneumococcal vaccination to eligible elders under EVSS is ongoing since its launch in October 2009.

The DH has set up a Vaccination Office to administer the scheme. Contact details are as follows:-

Address: Vaccination Office
Centre for Health Protection
2/F, 147C Argyle Street
Kowloon

Fax: 2713 9576

Email: vacs@dh.gov.hk

Telephone: 2125 2125

Operating hours: 9:00 a.m. – 5:30 p.m., (including lunch hours)
Monday through Friday (closed on Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays)



1.2 What service providers can participate in EVSS?

A doctor can join EVSS if he/she:-

- a) is a registered medical practitioner within the meaning of the Medical Registration Ordinance (Cap 161);
- b) holds a valid annual practising certificate; and
- c) works in the private medical sector (including university and non-government organisations).

To join EVSS, a doctor is required to enrol in advance (see Section 2).



1.3 Who are eligible for subsidy under EVSS?

An elder is eligible for subsidy by EVSS if he/she fulfils criteria **(a) AND (b)** listed as follows:-

a) holds a valid Hong Kong Identity Card (HKID) or a valid Certificate of Exemption;

AND

b) age of 65 years or above in the year of receiving the vaccine(s).

Elderly persons aged 65 years or above with chronic illness and who are being followed up in public clinics, as well as those aged 65 years or above receiving Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) or holders of valid Certificate of Waiver of Medical Charges can choose either to receive free seasonal influenza and pneumococcal vaccinations under Government Vaccination Programme or to get vaccination service provided by private doctors with fee subsidy under EVSS.

1.4 How to give seasonal influenza vaccination and pneumococcal vaccination to elders under EVSS?

Scientific Committee on Vaccine Preventable Diseases (SCVPD) recommendations:-

Seasonal influenza vaccine:-

Vaccine Composition

Recommended vaccines to be used in the 2014/15 season (northern hemisphere winter) comprise:

- A/California/7/2009 (H1N1)pdm09-like
- an A/Texas/50/2012 (H3N2)-like virus
- B/Massachusetts/2/2012-like virus

If quadrivalent influenza vaccine is being used, it shall contain the above three viruses and a B/Brisbane/60/2008-like virus.

Vaccine Type

Both trivalent and quadrivalent inactivated influenza vaccines are recommended for use in Hong Kong. Trivalent influenza vaccine may potentially prevent majority of influenza burden in Hong Kong, while quadrivalent influenza vaccine may potentially offer additional protection against influenza B.

Influenza occurs in Hong Kong throughout the year, but is usually more common in periods from January to March and from July to August. As the influenza vaccine composition is updated every year and the immunity built up in a vaccinated person in the prior season may become too low to provide protection in the next season, unless with known contraindications, all persons, including elders are recommended to receive seasonal influenza vaccination every year.



Pneumococcal vaccine:-

The EVSS will cover 23-valent polysaccharide pneumococcal vaccine (23vPPV). For elders 65 years of age and older, SCVPD recommends either a single dose of PCV13 or a single dose of 23vPPV. For those with additional at-high risk conditions, one-time revaccination may be considered 5 years after the first dose, depending on clinical judgement.

Note

All doctors are advised to read carefully the product information of the vaccines they have procured, noting especially the route of administration, dosage for elderly and expiry date.



Please note that the key steps including online enrolment, enrolment confirmation, login process, voucher/subsidy claims, together with reimbursement with respect to the screens shown on eHealth System (eHS) are ESSENTIALLY the same for:-

- a) Elderly Vaccination Subsidy Scheme (EVSS);**
- b) Childhood Influenza Vaccination Subsidy Scheme (CIVSS); and**
- c) Health Care Voucher Scheme (HCVS).**

You may skip the relevant parts in the Doctors' Guide for EVSS if you have already read through them in Doctors' Guide for CIVSS or vice versa.