

Elders' Guide on Elderly Vaccination Subsidy Scheme

1. What is Elderly Vaccination Subsidy Scheme?

The Government will continue EVSS in 2015/16 to encourage elders aged 65 or above to receive vaccination against seasonal influenza and pneumococcal infections. Commencing on 5 October 2015, elders who will be/are aged 65 or above are entitled to a \$160 Government subsidy per dose of seasonal influenza vaccination they receive from private medical doctors enrolled in the Scheme. Elders are also entitled to a HK\$190 Government subsidy per dose of pneumococcal vaccination if they are aged 65 years or above and have never received the vaccine before.

2. How much do elders need to pay for seasonal influenza and pneumococcal vaccinations under EVSS?

Elders will pay a discounted fee (original price minus Government subsidy) to private medical doctors who enroll in EVSS providing seasonal influenza and pneumococcal vaccination service. For example, if the original fee charged for seasonal influenza vaccination is \$280, then the elder will pay \$120.

It is important to note that while the Government subsidy per dose of each type of vaccination is the same for all eligible elders, the fees charged by different private medical doctors may vary.

For the sake of transparency, private medical doctors will display their fees for seasonal influenza and pneumococcal vaccinations on an EVSS poster in the clinic waiting area. Also, the Centre for Health Protection website (www.chp.gov.hk) will list the fees charged by private medical doctors enrolled in the EVSS. Please enquire about scheme details from clinic staff.

3. Am I eligible to receive Government subsidy under EVSS?

To be eligible for Government subsidy of seasonal influenza and pneumococcal vaccinations under EVSS, you have to be:

- a Hong Kong resident holding a valid Hong Kong Identity Card or Certificate of Exemption; AND
- aged 65 years or above this year.

On the other hands, elders aged 65 or above can receive free seasonal influenza vaccination under the Government Vaccination Programme. Elders aged 65 or above with chronic medical problems* and who are being followed up in public clinics, as well as those receiving Comprehensive Social Security Assistance or holders of valid Certificate of Waiver of Medical Charges can receive free pneumococcal vaccination under Government Vaccination Programme.

*People with chronic medical problems mainly refer to those who have chronic heart (except high blood pressure without complication), lung, metabolic or kidney diseases, obesity (BMI 30 or above), persons who are immunocompromised[^], and those with chronic neurological condition that can compromise respiratory function or the handling of respiratory secretions or that can increase the risk for aspiration or those who lack the ability to care for themselves.

[^]People who are immunocompromised refer to those with a weakened immune system due to disease (such as HIV/AIDS) or treatment (such as cancer treatment).

4. When will Elderly Vaccination Subsidy Scheme (EVSS) 2015/16 start?

The subsidy for seasonal influenza vaccination for EVSS 2015/16 will start on 15 October 2015, whereas the subsidy for pneumococcal vaccination has been effective since its launch in October 2009. Elders are encouraged to receive vaccination against the two diseases as soon as

practicable for optimal protection. Elders aged 65 or above are entitled to subsidy for one dose of seasonal influenza vaccination.

For elders aged 65 or above who have never received pneumococcal vaccination before can also received subsidy for one dosed of pneumococcal vaccination*.

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

5. How do I know which doctors have joined EVSS and provided the subsidised vaccination service?

Some private doctors, but not all, join EVSS. Private medical doctors who enroll in EVSS will display an EVSS logo near the entrance of their clinic for clients' recognition. They also display an EVSS mini-poster in their clinic waiting area showing the fees charged for seasonal influenza and pneumococcal vaccinations. In addition, information about doctors who join EVSS and the fees that they charge are posted at the Centre for Health Protection website (www.chp.gov.hk).

Logo



Poster



Please note that doctors who have no EVSS logo near the clinic entrance may not provide subsidised vaccinations to elders.

6. Can pneumococcal vaccine be received together with seasonal influenza vaccine?

Pneumococcal vaccine and seasonal influenza vaccine can be administered on the same day, but at different injection sites of the body.

7. What kinds of seasonal influenza vaccines are registered in Hong Kong?

Only inactivated seasonal influenza vaccine is currently registered in Hong Kong. Both trivalent and quadrivalent inactivated influenza vaccines are recommended for use in Hong Kong.

8. What is the recommended 2015/16 seasonal influenza vaccine composition?

The vaccine recommended by the Scientific Committee on Vaccine Preventable Diseases in 2015/16 contains the following:

- an A/California/7/2009 (H1N1)pdm09 -like virus
- an A/Switzerland/9715293/2013 (H3N2)-like virus
- a B/ Phuket/3073/2013-like virus

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

9. Who should not receive inactivated seasonal influenza vaccination?

People who are allergic to a previous dose of inactivated influenza vaccine or other vaccine components are not suitable to have inactivated seasonal influenza vaccination. Individuals with mild egg allergy who are considering an influenza vaccination can be given inactivated influenza vaccine in primary care. Individuals with diagnosed or suspected severe egg allergy should be seen by an allergist/immunologist for evaluation of egg allergy and for administration of inactivated influenza vaccine if clinically indicated. Those with bleeding disorders or on anticoagulants should consult their doctors for advice. If an individual suffers from fever on the day of vaccination, the vaccination should be deferred till recovery. Please consult your doctor if there are any queries.

10. Who should not receive pneumococcal vaccination?

Severe allergic reaction following a prior dose of 23vPPV or its vaccine component is a contraindication to the vaccine.

11. Are seasonal influenza and pneumococcal vaccines safe? What are the possible side-effects?

Both vaccines are very safe and usually well tolerated apart from occasional soreness, redness or swelling at the injection site. The recipient of influenza vaccination may experience fever, muscle and joint pains, and tiredness beginning 6 to 12 hours after vaccination, which last up to two days. If fever or discomforts persist, please consult your doctor. Immediate severe allergic reactions like rashes, swelling of the lips or tongue, and difficulties in breathing are rare and require emergency consultation.

Local reactions are more severe following a second dose of

pneumococcal vaccine but most resolve within a few days without treatment.

12. How can I open an eHealth service recipient account?

The EVSS enrolled doctor will open your eHealth account for you when you get subsidised vaccination. The registration is voluntary and free.

13. Where to get more information about EVSS?

More information about EVSS is available from the Centre for Health Protection website (http://www.chp.gov.hk/en/view_content/21839.html). You may also call the Vaccination Office enquiry telephone line 2125 2125 for details.

14. What are the steps for elders to receive subsidised seasonal influenza vaccination from a private medical doctor?

Elders can take the following steps to receive subsidised seasonal influenza and pneumococcal vaccinations:

1. Select a private medical doctor enrolled in the EVSS 2015/16.
2. Bring along your valid Hong Kong Identity Card or Certificate of Exemption as a proof of your Hong Kong resident status.
3. Bring along your vaccination record(s) for doctor's reference.
4. Consult the doctor for vaccination(s) and indicate your wish to use vaccination subsidy.
5. Duly complete and sign the Consent to Use Vaccination Subsidy.

(The consent form is available at enrolled doctors' clinics or can be downloaded from the CHP website http://www.chp.gov.hk/en/view_content/21881.html)
6. The clinic staff will open a new account for you or check your account through the eHealth System .
7. Receive vaccination(s).
8. Make use of the Government subsidy for payment.
9. Keep the vaccination record properly.
10. Staff of the Department of Health may contact you to verify whether you have received vaccination(s) and used the subsidy.