

# Vaccination Subsidy Scheme (VSS) 2017/18

## Information about Seasonal Influenza Vaccination and Pneumococcal Vaccination

### (I) Vaccination Subsidy Scheme (VSS)

To encourage seasonal influenza vaccination (influenza vaccination) to prevent influenza and its complications, the Government will continue to launch the VSS. Starting from October / November 2017 (Please take note of the government's announcement), eligible Hong Kong residents can get a subsidy of HK\$190 per dose for influenza vaccination received from private doctors enrolled in the Scheme. Eligible children aged less than 9 years and have not received influenza vaccination before, are entitled for receiving subsidies for 2 doses.



Eligible elderly aged 65 or above can also get subsidy for pneumococcal vaccination (available throughout the year). Subsidy level of one dose of 23-valent pneumococcal polysaccharide vaccine (23vPPV) is HK\$190. Subsidy level of one dose of 13-valent pneumococcal conjugate vaccine (PCV13) is HK\$730. (please refer to part (III))

#### 1. Who are eligible to join the VSS?

The following Hong Kong residents are eligible to join VSS:

- Pregnant women;
- Elderly aged 65 or above in this year;
- Children aged between 6 months and below 12 years, or children aged 12 years or above who are studying at a primary school in Hong Kong;
- Persons with intellectual disability (PID) holding Registration Card for People with Disabilities (with indication of intellectual disability), or a certificate certifying the person is a PID or eligible for VSS 2017/18 issued by a registered doctor or the person in-charge from the designated institutions serving the PID;
- Persons receiving Disability Allowance

(Some eligible persons may also choose to receive free vaccination at public clinics under the Government Vaccination Programme. Please visit the CHP website [www.chp.gov.hk](http://www.chp.gov.hk) for details)

#### 2. Where can eligible persons receive subsidised vaccination(s)?

Eligible persons can visit the clinics of enrolled private doctors to receive subsidised vaccination. Enrolled doctors will display a VSS logo in their clinics. In addition, information about doctors who have joined the VSS and their charges will be uploaded onto the CHP website [www.chp.gov.hk](http://www.chp.gov.hk).

#### 3. Who should sign the Consent to Use Vaccination Subsidy Form?

For persons aged below 18 years / persons with mental incapacitation, the Consent form should be signed by parents / guardians. Otherwise, the Consent form can be signed by the vaccine recipients.

#### 4. If the parent / guardian is unable to accompany the eligible children / wards personally to the doctor's clinic, can he / she ask a relative / domestic helper to bring the eligible person there?

Yes, but the parent / guardian will have to fill in and sign the Consent to Use Vaccination Subsidy form prior to visiting the doctor's clinic. The form is available at the participating doctors' clinics or can be downloaded from the CHP website.

### (II) Information about Seasonal Influenza Vaccination (Influenza Vaccination)

Both trivalent and quadrivalent inactivated influenza vaccines are recommended by the Scientific Committee on Vaccine Preventable Diseases (SCVPD) under the Centre for Health Protection to be used 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. Please consult your family doctor for more details. As it usually takes about 2 weeks for antibodies to develop and provide protection against influenza virus, members of public should receive the influenza vaccination as early as possible.

#### 1. Why is influenza vaccination important? And who should receive the vaccination?

Influenza vaccination is one of the effective means to prevent influenza and its complications together with reduction in influenza related hospitalisation and death.

Given influenza vaccines are safe and effective and severe cases can occur even in healthy persons, all members of the public aged 6 months or above, except those with known contraindications, should receive influenza vaccine for personal protection.

#### 2. What is the recommended 2017/18 influenza vaccine composition?

The vaccine recommended by SCVPD in 2017/18 contains the following:

- an A/Michigan/45/2015 (H1N1) pdm09-like virus
- an A/Hong Kong/4801/2014 (H3N2)-like virus
- a B/Brisbane/60/2008-like virus

If quadrivalent influenza vaccine is being used, it shall contain the above three viruses and a B/ Phuket/3073/2013-like virus

### 3. Is influenza vaccine safe? What are the possible side effects?

Inactivated influenza vaccine is very safe and usually well tolerated apart from occasional soreness, redness or swelling at the injection site. Some recipients may experience fever, muscle pain, and tiredness beginning 6 – 12 hours after vaccination and lasting up to 2 days. If fever or symptoms persist, please consult your doctor. Immediate severe allergic reactions like hives, swelling of the lips or tongue, and difficulties in breathing are rare and require emergency medical attention.

Influenza vaccination may be rarely followed by serious adverse events such as Guillain-Barré syndrome (1 to 2 cases per million vaccinees) and severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) (9 per 10 million doses distributed). However, influenza vaccination may not necessarily have causal relations with these adverse events. Studies have shown that the risk of Guillain-Barré Syndrome after influenza infection (17.20 per million) is much higher than after influenza vaccination (1.03 per million).

### 4. Who should not receive inactivated influenza vaccine?

People who are allergic to a previous dose of inactivated influenza vaccine or other vaccine components are not suitable to have inactivated influenza vaccination. Individuals with mild egg allergy can be given the vaccination in primary care. Individuals with a history of anaphylaxis to egg who are considering an influenza vaccination should be seen by an allergist or 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 has fever on the day of vaccination, the vaccination should be deferred till recovery.

### 5. How many doses of influenza vaccination are needed every year?

Persons aged 9 years old or above, they are recommended to receive 1 dose in the 2017/18 season.

To ensure adequate immunity against influenza, children under 9 years old who have never received any influenza vaccine are recommended to have 2 doses influenza vaccine in 2017/18 season, with a minimum interval of 4 weeks. Children who have received influenza vaccine in the 2016/17 season or before are recommended to receive 1 dose in the 2017/18 season.

### 6. If a child under the age of 9 years is getting influenza vaccine for the first time and requires 2 doses, does the same type of vaccine have to be used for both doses?

No, the first and second doses do not have to match; trivalent or quadrivalent inactivated influenza vaccine can be used for either dose. The doses should be separated by at least 4 weeks.

## (III) Information about Pneumococcal Vaccination for elderly

Elderly persons are at risk of developing severe invasive pneumococcal diseases such as infection of blood, lung and membrane of brain. Getting vaccinated can effectively prevent pneumococcal infection, as well as their complications.

To strengthen the prevention of pneumococcal infection, the Government will provide pneumococcal vaccination to Hong Kong residents aged 65 years or above with subsidy as follows:

<b>Elderly aged 65 years or above</b>	<b>Have not received any pneumococcal vaccination</b>	<b>Have received 23vPPV</b>
<b>Without high-risk conditions</b>	Subsidise one dose of 23vPPV	No vaccination needed
<b>With high-risk conditions</b>	Subsidise one dose of PCV13 followed by one dose of 23vPPV one year after	Subsidise one mop-up dose of PCV13 one year after the previous 23vPPV

High-risk conditions include: History of invasive pneumococcal disease, cerebrospinal fluid leakage or cochlear implant; Chronic cardiovascular (except hypertension without complication), lung, liver or kidney diseases; Metabolic diseases including diabetes mellitus or obesity (Body Mass Index 30 or above); Immunocompromised states related to weakened immune system due to conditions such as asplenia; Human Immunodeficiency Virus infection/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome or cancer/steroid treatment; And chronic neurological conditions that can compromise respiratory functions or the handling of respiratory secretions, or increase the risk for aspiration or those who lack the ability to take care of themselves.

### 1. Is pneumococcal vaccine safe? What are the possible side effects?

Pneumococcal vaccines have been demonstrated to be safe. Common adverse reactions include slight swelling and tenderness at the injection site shortly following injection but most resolve within two days. Some may experience mild fever, fatigue, headache, chills, or muscle pain.

### 2. Who should not receive pneumococcal vaccine?

Severe allergic reaction following a previous dose of pneumococcal vaccine or to the vaccine component; or any diphtheria toxoid-containing vaccine; or those receiving chemotherapy or radiotherapy are contraindications to pneumococcal vaccination.

For more information about VSS, please visit the CHP website [www.chp.gov.hk](http://www.chp.gov.hk) or call 2125 2125