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Dear Doctors,

**Scientific Committee Interim Consensus Statement on Use of Seasonal Influenza Vaccine in Remaining Period of 2017/18 Season**

We would like to inform you that the Scientific Committee on Vaccine Preventable Diseases (SCVPD) of the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) has reviewed the latest situation of the local 2017/18 winter influenza season and the interim vaccine effectiveness estimates of the seasonal influenza vaccine (SIV) in out-patient and paediatric in-patient settings in Hong Kong in its recent meeting. Subsequently, the SCVPD has drawn up an interim consensus statement regarding the use of SIV in the remaining period of the 2017/18 season.

The SCVPD reaffirmed that the 2017/18 Northern Hemisphere (NH) SIV is effective in the current winter season in Hong Kong. All members of the public aged six months or above who have not yet received any SIV in the 2017/18 season, except those with known contraindications, should receive SIV as early as possible. The recommendations on vaccine type, vaccine precaution and priority group issued by the SCVPD in June 2017 remain valid ([https://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/short\\_version\\_of\\_recommendations\\_on\\_seasonal\\_influenza\\_vaccination\\_for\\_the\\_2017\\_18.pdf](https://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/short_version_of_recommendations_on_seasonal_influenza_vaccination_for_the_2017_18.pdf)). The dosage and dosing schedule specified in the insert should be followed.

In view of the recent upsurge in demand for the 2017/18 NH SIV locally, it is anticipated that the 2017/18 NH SIV may become unavailable in the coming one to two months. In this case, the SCVPD agreed that the 2018 Southern Hemisphere (SH) SIV can be used for those who still require influenza vaccination, noting that the vaccine components in both 2017/18 NH and 2018 SH SIVs are either the same or antigenically similar (**Annex**).



However, the SCVPD stressed that persons who had already completed influenza vaccination in the current season (irrespective of the type of NH SIV used)

are **NOT** advised to receive additional dose of SIV within the 2017/18 season, as there is no scientific consensus on receiving SIV twice a year. This is also in line with the World Health Organization's recommendation of annual vaccination to protect against seasonal influenza.

Details of the interim consensus statement can be found on CHP's website: [https://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/interim\\_consensus\\_statement\\_on\\_use\\_of\\_siv\\_feb\\_2018.pdf](https://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/interim_consensus_statement_on_use_of_siv_feb_2018.pdf).

The latest surveillance data on seasonal influenza are published in the "Flu Express", a weekly report available on the CHP website (<https://www.chp.gov.hk/en/resources/29/304.html>). Please draw the attention of the healthcare professionals in your institution/ working with you to the above. Thank you for your unfailing support in prevention and control of communicable diseases.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in red ink, appearing to read 'SK CHUANG', is written over a light blue rectangular background.

(Dr. SK CHUANG)

for Controller, Centre for Health Protection  
Department of Health

**Annex**

**Compositions of the SIVs for the 2017/18 NH and the 2018 SH SIV:**

<b>Type</b>		<b>2017/18 NH SIV</b>	<b>2018 SH SIV</b>
<b>Trivalent SIV</b>	<b>H1</b>	an A/Michigan/45/2015 (H1N1)pdm09-like virus	
	<b>H3</b>	an A/Hong Kong/4801/2014 (H3N2)-like virus	an A/Singapore/INFIMH-16-0019/2016 (H3N2)-like virus
	<b>B</b>	a B/Brisbane/60/2008-like virus	a B/Phuket/3073/2013-like virus
<b>Additional influenza B component in quadrivalent SIV</b>		a B/Phuket/3073/2013-like virus	a B/Brisbane/60/2008-like virus