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10 February 2010

Dear Doctor,

**Expert Group Statement on a suspected case of Acute Disseminated
Encephalomyelitis following Human Swine Influenza Vaccination**

I would like to inform you that the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) had received report on 4 February 2010 of a suspected case of encephalitis following human swine influenza (HSI) vaccination. The Expert Group on Serious Adverse Events following HSI Vaccination met today to review the case and issued a statement.

The patient was a 67-year-old woman who developed generalized weakness on 12 January 2010, followed by fever and headache on 15 January 2010. She had undiagnosed diabetes mellitus and she went into septicaemic shock and renal failure requiring renal replacement therapy. She is currently staying in the intensive care unit in critical condition.

Further magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) examination of the brain done on 1 February 2010 showed features suggestive of acute disseminated encephalomyelitis (ADEM). Other differential diagnoses include vasculitis, multiple infarcts and infection.

She received HSI vaccine on 23 December 2009 in a government outpatient clinic.

Locally, the exact incidence of ADEM is not known. From record reviews, the expert group noted that there had been at least one case that was preceded by seasonal influenza infection and another preceded by HSI infection in 2008 and 2009



respectively.

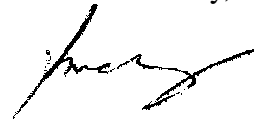
The clinical features of this patient are compatible with ADEM. Further investigations are ongoing to better delineate the cause of her illness. **The Expert Group concluded that her illness is unlikely to be caused by HSI vaccine.**

Review of the surveillance data so far continues to support the safety of HSI vaccines. CHP will closely monitor the local and global situation. The HSI vaccination programme in Hong Kong will proceed as normal.

Vaccination is one the most effective ways to prevent HSI infection and its complications. The benefits of HSI vaccination far outweigh the risks. Since the launch of HSI vaccination programme in Hong Kong, a total of 42 severe cases, including 12 fatal cases, were reported. Majority of them (35 of 42 severe cases and 11 of 12 fatal cases) belonged to high risk groups and all of them had not received HSI vaccines.

Information on vaccination related reports and the statement issued by the Expert Group is available at http://www.chp.gov.hk/en/view_content/19266.html.

Yours sincerely,



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