

監測及流行病學處



Surveillance
And
Epidemiology
Branch

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16 June 2008

Dear Doctor,

Influenza Vaccination for the 2008/09 Season

I am pleased to inform you that the Scientific Committee on Vaccine Preventable Diseases (SCVPD) has provided updated recommendations on the use of influenza vaccine. The SCVPD recommends the following population groups of people to receive influenza vaccination for the coming 2008/09 influenza season:

- (A) Elderly persons living in residential care homes
- (B) Long-stay residents of institutions for the disabled
- (C) Elderly persons aged 65 years or above
- (D) Persons with chronic illnesses
- (E) Health care workers
- (F) Poultry workers
- (G) Children aged 6 to 23 months
- (H) Pregnant women
- (I) Children aged 2 to 5 years

This year, the SCVPD has expanded the recommendation to the group of children aged 2 to 5 years as hospital data show a higher hospitalisation rate among this age group compared with the general population.



The SCVPD has also advised that influenza vaccination is recommended for persons having chronic neurological disorders 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 for their increased risk of complications and death associated with influenza infection.

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The disease burden in other members of the public not included in the recommendations is generally lower in terms of hospitalisation rate, complications and death. Those who wish to obtain influenza vaccine for their personal protection are advised to consult their doctors.

For details, please refer to our website via the following URL:
(<http://www.chp.gov.hk/sas6.asp?lang=en&id=106&pid=110&ppid=101>)

The Government is now studying the new SCVPD recommendation and is considering how best to encourage children aged 6 months to 5 years to receive influenza vaccination. Details will be announced in due course.

Concerning other target groups which were the same as last year's, the Government Influenza Vaccination Programme (GIVP) will continue to provide free vaccination through hospitals and clinics under the Department of Health (DH) and the Hospital Authority (HA) to the following eligible groups for the 2008/09 flu season:

- i) elderly persons living in residential care homes;
- ii) long-stay residents of institutions for the disabled;
- iii) elderly persons aged 65 years or above with chronic illness and being followed up in public clinics, as well as those aged 65 years or above receiving Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA);
- iv) persons under 65 years with chronic illness receiving CSSA, and some long-stay HA in-patients who had chronic illness;
- v) health care workers of DH, HA and other government departments, as well as health care workers in elderly homes or institutions for the disabled;
- vi) poultry workers or staff who may be involved in the poultry culling operations;
- vii) children aged from 6 to 23 months from families receiving CSSA;
- viii) pregnant women receiving CSSA.

To ensure adequate supply of influenza vaccines for your clients, you may wish to consider vaccine procurement early. Concerted efforts from both private and public sectors are needed for successful implementation of the SCVPD's recommendations and your continuous support is highly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,



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