



本署檔號 Our Ref. : (4) in DH/ERPMB/PMVD/VS/SIVOP/P1-3/5  
電話 Tel : 2125 2128  
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3 October 2023

Dear Supervisors/ Principals,

### **Appeal for Promoting Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Uptake in Children**

Influenza can cause serious illnesses in high-risk individuals and even healthy persons. Vaccination is one of the most effective ways to prevent seasonal influenza and its complications. To increase seasonal influenza vaccination (SIV) uptake amongst school students and to facilitate schools in arranging outreach vaccination, the Department of Health strongly encourages your school to arrange outreach seasonal influenza vaccination service at your campus to protect your students, if not yet done.

As the local seasonal influenza activity has remained at a low level over the past three years, the overall immunity of Hong Kong citizens against influenza is relatively low. Hong Kong has entered summer flu season and the winter influenza season is approaching. An increase in influenza-associated hospital admission rate amongst children aged 0-5 years was recorded, and also a significant increase in the number of outbreak of influenza-like illness (ILI) at schools since the school year started in early September. In 2023, 19 paediatric cases of influenza-associated complication/deaths were recorded so far, in which 5 of them were fatal. Children are at risk of complications from influenza and SIV is an effective means to prevent influenza-related hospitalisation and death.

SIV can also reduce school absenteeism and reduce influenza transmission in the community. According to local experience, school outreach programme for SIV significantly improved influenza vaccine coverage. Vaccination reduces occurrence of ILI. Schools with outreach vaccination had significantly lower risk of ILI outbreaks in schools than schools without outreach vaccination.

Should your school wish to organise school outreach vaccination activities, you may still enrol in the Seasonal Influenza Vaccination School Outreach (Free of Charge) Programme 2023/24. Under the Programme, all school students of the participating schools can receive free seasonal influenza vaccination, through Public-Private-Partnership (PPP) vaccination

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THE GOVERNMENT OF THE HONG KONG  
SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGION  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT &  
VACCINATION DIVISION  
3/F, TWO HARBOURFRONT, 18-22 TAK FUNG  
STREET, HUNG HOM, KOWLOON

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teams. Alternatively, you can invite doctors from the list published on the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) website under the Vaccination Subsidy Scheme School Outreach (Extra Charge Allowed) to provide subsidised outreach vaccination services for your students. Please refer to **Annex** for details.

In addition, your school may also encourage students to receive SIV from private doctors who have enrolled in “Vaccination Subsidy Scheme (VSS)”. Information about enrolled doctors and the extra fees incurred has been uploaded to the CHP website (see **Annex**).

The Government strongly urges the public, especially children and adolescents to receive SIV for this season as soon as possible as it takes about two weeks to develop antibodies for protection against influenza virus infection.

Should you have any enquiries or wish to enrol into the School Outreach Programme, please contact us at 2125 2299/ 3975 4806. Thank you very much for your support in advance.

Yours sincerely,  
Programme Management and Vaccination Division  
Center for Health Protection  
Department of Health

**2023/24 Seasonal Influenza Vaccination School Outreach (Free of Charge)**  
**Programme**  
**Kindergarten (KG)/Child Care Centre (CCC) Outreach**

**Objectives of the Programme:** The Programme aims to facilitate pre-primary institutions, including kindergartens, kindergarten-cum-child care centres, child care centres and special child care centres in arranging outreach vaccination, so as to increase the seasonal influenza vaccination coverage for school children, to reduce school absenteeism, influenza related complications, hospitalisations and deaths, and to reduce influenza transmission in the community.

**Eligibility to join:** Under the Programme, all pre-primary institutions, including kindergartens, kindergarten-cum-child care centres, child care centres and special child care centres can join the Programme. All school children of the participating schools can receive free seasonal influenza vaccination, through Public-Private-Partnership (PPP) vaccination teams\*. School may choose their PPP vaccination team through either *School Self-selection of Doctors* or by *Department of Health (DH)-matching*.

✧ *School Self-selection of Doctors*

- i. Schools can choose a private doctor/ medical organisation from the list posted on the Centre for Health Protection website: <https://www.chp.gov.hk/en/features/101413.html>.
- ii. Schools with prior outreach vaccination activities may continue the partnership with the previous doctors/ medical organisations.

✧ *DH-matching*

- i. For schools which have not selected a private doctor/ medical organisation, DH would match a service doctor\* with the school.

\*For schools in remote areas (e.g. outlying islands) or areas requiring Closed Road Permit or Closed Area Permit (e.g. Lantau Island, Sha Tau Kok), DH may arrange DH Vaccination Team to provide the outreach vaccination service.

**Types of vaccines being used:** The DH will provide **ONE** type of the seasonal influenza vaccines, either injectable type (inactivated seasonal influenza vaccines) or nasal spray type (live attenuated seasonal influenza vaccines) for KG/CCC School Outreach, depending on the availability of the stock and the preference of the school.

**Roles and responsibilities of schools:** Since schools are provided with vaccination services free of charge, they do not need to conduct tendering or quotation exercise when

choosing a doctor. Schools are reminded to stay clear of associating with any improper financial (or advantage) transactions when choosing your service doctor through School Self-selection of Doctor.

Schools are responsible for:-

- 1) Distributing and collecting consent forms;
- 2) Verifying the particulars of the students provided in the consent forms;
- 3) Arranging vaccination venue;
- 4) Preparing the flow for vaccination day(s) (complete the 1<sup>st</sup> dose within 1 day; and completing 2<sup>nd</sup> dose on another day, with at least 4 weeks apart from 1<sup>st</sup> dose);
- 5) Assisting in the operation of the vaccination team during the vaccination activities; and
- 6) Providing locked cabinet(s) for temporary storage of clinical waste in case same day collection of clinical waste cannot be arranged.

#### **Announcement of the application results**

The schools will be informed the **application and the matching results** in due course.

#### **Remarks**

For schools that are not interested in joining the 2023/24 Seasonal Influenza Vaccination School Outreach (Free of Charge) Programme, they can invite private doctors from the Vaccination Subsidy Scheme (VSS) School Outreach (Extra Charge Allowed) (website: <http://www.chp.gov.hk/en/features/101452.html>) to provide outreach vaccination at schools. All school children of the participating schools can receive seasonal influenza vaccination with subsidy from the Government. Private doctors under the Scheme may impose **extra charges**. Schools can discuss with the private doctors for the type of vaccine to be used. School staff and students' family members can also receive vaccination under the outreach vaccination activity, but the Government only provides subsidy to persons of VSS eligible groups. Non-eligible persons can join the activity via self-payment.

Alternatively, schools may encourage students to receive seasonal influenza vaccination (SIV) from private doctors who have enrolled in "Vaccination Subsidy Scheme(VSS)". Enrolled private doctors display a VSS logo in their clinics. Information about enrolled doctors and the extra fees they charge has been uploaded to the CHP website (<https://apps.hcv.gov.hk/public/en/SPS/Search>).