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15 August 2022

To: Supervisors / Principals of all Kindergartens, Kindergartens cum Child Care Centres, and Operators / Supervisors of Child Care Centres (including Special Child Care Centres) and Early Education and Training Centres

Dear Supervisor / Principal / Operator,

COVID-19 Vaccination Programme Vaccination arrangements for young children

The fifth wave of the pandemic has taken its heavy toll on children, and deaths and severe cases are recorded. Up till now, the pandemic has not subsided. Vaccination is an effective way to reduce the risk of severe after-effects, serious illness or death associated with the virus. Hence, to provide a better health protection to children, parents/ guardians are strongly recommended to arrange vaccinations for their young children/ wards as soon as possible.

Having regard to the joint recommendations of the Scientific Committee on Vaccine Preventable Diseases, the Scientific Committee on Emerging and Zoonotic Diseases under the Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health and the Chief Executive's expert advisory panel on 1 August, the Government announced on 2 August that the minimum age for receiving the Sinovac CoronaVac vaccine (Sinovac vaccine) is lowered to 6 months old.

The Government continue to provide group bookings service at the Community Vaccination Centres or the designated Student Health Service Centres of the Department of Health (provide Sinovac vaccination for children/adolescents aged between 3 and 17 years only), as well as free transport service from and to kindergartens/kindergartens cum child care centres (hereafter as “kindergartens”). The service is now extended to child care centres (including special child care centres) and early education and training centres, so long as there are 10 or more children aged between 6 months to below 3 years old, or 20 children, parents/ guardians or staff who will receive the vaccine. Moreover, if these institutions plan to arrange doctors for administering outreach Sinovac vaccination, they can make reference to the “Guidelines on Arranging Outreach COVID-19 Vaccination Activities through Vaccination Subsidy Scheme (VSS)” (https://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/covid19vss_guidelinesforschooloutreach_eng.pdf) and may contact the doctors by themselves (https://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/list_vssdr_covid_non_clinic_eng.pdf). Kindergartens can continue to apply for outreach Sinovac vaccination services matched by the Education Bureau (EDB).

If kindergartens have difficulties or enquiries regarding vaccination arrangements, please feel free to contact the respective Senior School Development Officer/Senior Service Officer of EDB. Child care centres (including special child care centres) may contact Child Care Centres Advisory Inspectorate of the Social Welfare Department at 3184 0804; and early education and training centres may contact Rehabilitation and Medical Social Services Section of the Social Welfare Department at 2892 5135 about the enquiries they may have.

Parents and guardians can also make their own bookings at Community Vaccination Centres, or designated general out-patient clinics of the Hospital Authority, or the designated Student Health Service Centres of the Department of Health for their children/wards through the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme website (<https://booking.covidvaccine.gov.hk/forms/index.jsp>) direct. Starting from 15 August, the Maternal and Child Health Centres under the Department of Health (DH) will provide the Sinovac vaccination service to children aged 6 months to 3 years when they receive regular services with bookings. For children who are between 6 months and 11 years old, apart from the completed Consent Form for the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme (https://www.covidvaccine.gov.hk/pdf/Consent_Form_for_COVID19_Vaccination_ENG.pdf) and the original copy of the identity document, they have to be accompanied by an adult relative, domestic helper, school teacher/staff concerned on site to receive vaccination.

Parents / guardians can also make an appointment to get the Sinovac vaccination through private doctors or clinics that participate in the Vaccination Programme. For details, please refer to <https://www.covidvaccine.gov.hk/en/VSS>.

For more information on the vaccination for adolescents and children, please visit the link to read the relevant FAQs (https://www.covidvaccine.gov.hk/pdf/FAQ_children_adolescents_ENG.pdf). Regarding the Programme in general, please visit the website of COVID-19 Vaccination Programme at <https://www.covidvaccine.gov.hk>.

Thank you for your support in advance.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'H. Chan', on a light yellow background.

(Hermes Chan)
for Secretary for the Civil Service