# Advisory Panel on COVID-19 Vaccines convenes meeting to conduct continuous benefit-risk analysis of authorised COVID-19 vaccines

The Advisory Panel on COVID-19 Vaccines (Advisory Panel) convened a meeting today (September 30) to conduct continuous benefit-risk analysis of the authorised COVID-19 vaccines. The meeting was chaired by convenor Professor Wallace Lau Chak-sing.

The Secretary for Food and Health (SFH) authorised two COVID-19 vaccines, namely the Comirnaty vaccine and the Sinovac vaccine, in accordance with the Prevention and Control of Disease (Use of Vaccines) Regulation (Cap. 599K) (the Regulation) on January 25 and February 18 respectively. To comply with the conditions of authorisation, the authorisation applicants are required to submit the latest clinical data on the vaccines, safety update reports and quality certification documents, etc. for continuous review and monitoring.

At the meeting today, the Advisory Panel reviewed the continuous benefit-risk balance of the two authorised vaccines. After reviewing all the latest available clinical and safety data related to the Comirnaty and Sinovac vaccines (including safety reports submitted by the authorisation applicants), the Advisory Panel considered that there was no other new significant safety signal identified, though continuous monitoring was required. The quality of the batches of Comirnaty and Sinovac vaccine imported has already passed the certification and appropriate testing for quality control. In summary, the Advisory Panel still considered that the benefits of the two vaccines outweighed the risks, and that there was no need to recommend changes regarding the use of the two vaccines.

After reviewing the local COVID-19 epidemic situation and comparing the risks and benefits of receiving the second dose of Comirnaty vaccine by those aged 12 to 17, the Advisory Panel agreed with the updated recommendation made by the Scientific Committee on Vaccine Preventable Diseases and the Scientific Committee on Emerging and Zoonotic Diseases under the Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health together with the Chief Executive's expert advisory panel on September 15, which was that, after balancing the risks and benefits in the light of the local epidemic situation, those aged 12 to 17 are recommended to receive one dose of the Comirnaty vaccine. Furthermore, the Advisory Panel considered that, under the current usage conditions of the Comirnaty vaccine, the Government should continue to monitor the global and local epidemic situation and relevant clinical data on vaccines, and recommended the Government to consider undertaking a relevant scientific research study on the efficacy of providing the second dose of Comirnaty vaccine to those aged 12 to 17.

The Advisory Panel will submit the relevant views to the SFH for consideration. The information concerned will be uploaded to the website of the Food and Health Bureau later on.

"The Government will continue to ensure that the authorised vaccines satisfy the criteria of safety, efficacy and quality, and keep on disseminating the latest safety and scientific information on the relevant vaccines to the public and relevant stakeholders in a timely manner," the spokesman said.