

SFH approves lowering age limit for receiving CoronaVac vaccine

The Secretary for Food and Health (SFH) has approved extending the age eligibility of the CoronaVac vaccine to cover those aged three to 17. Also, having regard to the recommendations 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 (JSC) together with the Chief Executive's expert advisory panel (EAP), the SFH agreed that adolescents aged 12 to 17 will be accorded priority to receive the CoronaVac vaccine, with a view to extending to children of a younger age group at a later stage.

The Advisory Panel on COVID-19 Vaccines (Advisory Panel) had earlier reviewed the application on lowering the age limit for receiving the CoronaVac vaccine to age three and the relevant clinical research data submitted by Sinovac, and recommended the SFH to approve the application concerned. At the same time, the Advisory Panel also recommended to provide the relevant information to the JSC for examination, in order to facilitate the decision on the priority groups to receive the CoronaVac vaccine.

The JSC-EAP convened a meeting yesterday (November 19) to examine the information regarding lowering the age limit for receiving the CoronaVac vaccine, in order to determine the priority groups for receiving the relevant vaccine. Given the local context and real world experience accrued outside Hong Kong, the JSC-EAP recommended the use of CoronaVac vaccine in adolescents from 12 to 17 years of age for priority deployment, with a view of extending to children of a younger age group at a later stage ([see separate press release](#)).

With reference to the advice of the Advisory Panel and having considered the threat to public health posed by COVID-19, the SFH considered that the benefits of approving the extension of the age eligibility of the CoronaVac vaccine to cover those aged three to 17 outweigh the risks. Doing so can protect them from COVID-19 infection and also enable them to resume normal school and daily life as soon as possible.

Having regard to the latest recommendations made by the JSC-EAP, the Government will announce the relevant arrangements for first providing the CoronaVac vaccine to adolescents aged 12 to 17 as soon as practicable.