

Scientific Committees under CHP update consensus interim recommendations on use of COVID-19 vaccines in Hong Kong

The Scientific Committee on Vaccine Preventable Diseases and the Scientific Committee on Emerging and Zoonotic Diseases (JSC) under the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health convened an online meeting, joined by the Chief Executive's expert advisory panel (EAP) yesterday (May 19), to discuss the use of a fourth dose of COVID-19 vaccine in adults aged 18 to 59 years in Hong Kong. The updated consensus interim recommendations have been published today (May 20).

Having reviewed the latest scientific evidence and local situation, the JSC-EAP considered that the prevailing aim of COVID-19 vaccine strategy is to prevent severe disease and death due to COVID-19. Local data showed that three doses of Comirnaty vaccine or CoronaVac vaccine are highly effective against severe disease and death, and the protection is generally maintained at a high level over months.

The JSC-EAP considered a fourth dose of COVID-19 vaccine in younger populations may provide transient additional protection against infection and symptomatic diseases. Uninfected individuals aged 18 to 59 years who are at higher risk of COVID-19 exposure (Note 1) or with personal needs (e.g. to study abroad or to fulfil a requirement for overseas travel etc.) may choose to receive a fourth dose of COVID-19 vaccine at least six months from the third dose after considering the individual risk and benefit, and such an approach would also be applied for recovered adults in the same age group. On the other hand, the experts recommended last month a fourth dose of COVID-19 vaccine for individuals aged 60 years or above as this group forms the majority of local fatal cases in the fifth wave of the COVID-19 epidemic.

The JSC-EAP reiterated the importance of building up immunity against severe disease and death due to COVID-19 in the general population by completing the recommended doses of COVID-19 vaccines to prevent forthcoming epidemic. The experts will continue to closely monitor any new scientific evidence to inform the use of further doses.

Details of the interim recommendations are available at the CHP's website www.chp.gov.hk/en/static/24008.html.

Note 1:

Higher risk of COVID-19 exposure includes:

- Workers in healthcare settings, residential care homes for the elderly or residential care homes for persons with disabilities;
- Workers at increased risk for COVID-19 exposure and transmission because of occupational setting (personnel participating in anti-epidemic related work; personnel providing cross-boundary transportation or working at control

points and ports).

Government announces latest situation of fresh food supply from Mainland

A Government spokesman announced today (May 20) that the supply of fresh food from the Mainland yesterday (May 19) was sufficient and stable.

According to the latest information, the quantity of vegetables supplied from the Mainland to Hong Kong yesterday (as of midnight) by land and water transportation was about 2 600 tonnes, comparable to the average daily supply from the Mainland on a normal day. The volume of vegetables sold through the wholesale markets of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) and the Vegetable Marketing Organization was over 880 tonnes. The average wholesale prices of choi sum and pak choi stood at \$5.80 and \$5.30 per catty respectively yesterday, lower than their average daily wholesale prices last year. The supply of eggs to the wholesale market was normal, with the average daily supply standing at over 2.7 million for the past week.

The total supply of chilled meat from the Mainland yesterday was over 44 tonnes. The supply of live pigs was plentiful.

The supply of chilled poultry from the Mainland was over 160 000 head yesterday, and over 9 000 live chickens were slaughtered locally. The supply was abundant.

Regarding the rice supply, in compliance with the requirement by the Government, stockholders of rice have to maintain the reserve stock of rice at a level sufficient for consumption by the local population for 15 days. The trade generally stocks double the required amount, which is sufficient for one month's consumption by Hong Kong citizens. In recent years, the import and consumption of rice in Hong Kong has stood at a steady level of around 320 000 to 330 000 tonnes per year. The import quantity (including reserve stock) as of end-March 2022 was 27 300 tonnes. Suppliers also maintain a reserve for food that can be stored, such as frozen meat, for around three months' stock generally.

The Government will continue to maintain close liaison with the Mainland authorities and major food suppliers to ensure a stable food supply.

The AFCD updates and publishes the fresh food supply information daily. Members of the public may visit the AFCD website for updates on daily supplies and wholesale prices of fresh food (www.afcd.gov.hk/english/agriculture/agr_fresh/agr_fresh.html).

[Sick person in custody dies in public hospital](#)

A sick 67-year-old male remand person in custody at Lai Chi Kok Reception Centre died in a public hospital today (May 20).

The person in custody suffered from lung cancer. He required continuous medical care and follow-up at the institution hospital and a public hospital. On May 10, he was sent to a public hospital for treatment due to physical discomfort. During hospitalisation, his condition deteriorated and he was certified dead at 6.08am today.

The case has been reported to the Police. A death inquest will be held by the Coroner's Court.

The person in custody was remanded for the offence of conspiracy to defraud in April 2022.

[Appointments to Airport Authority Hong Kong](#)

The Government today (May 20) announced the re-appointment of two serving members, as well as the appointment of two new members, to the Airport Authority Hong Kong (AA) with effect from June 1, 2022.

The two serving members to be re-appointed are Dr Lo Wai-kwok and Mr Stuart Thomson Gulliver. Dr Lo and Mr Gulliver are re-appointed for three years to May 31, 2025.

The two new members are Mr Philip Chen Nan-lok and Mr Laurence Li Lu-jen, SC. Mr Chen and Mr Li are appointed for three years to May 31, 2025.

Mr Frankie Yick Chi-ming, Dr Allan Zeman and Mr Thomas Jefferson Wu will be leaving the AA on June 1, 2022. The Secretary for Transport and Housing, Mr Frank Chan Fan, expressed his heartfelt appreciation to the three members for their valuable advice on various issues concerning the services and expansion of Hong Kong International Airport and their contributions to the work of the AA during their tenure.

Under the Airport Authority Ordinance, the Chairman and members of the AA are appointed by the Chief Executive. The appointments were published in

the Government Gazette today.

The following is the full membership of the AA with effect from June 1, 2022:

Chairman:

Mr Jack So Chak-kwong

Members:

Mr Rock Chen Chung-nin
Mr Philip Chen Nan-lok
Ms Sabrina Chao Sih-ming
Ms Irene Chow Man-ling
Mr Stuart Thomson Gulliver
Ms Nisa Bernice Leung Wing-yu
Mr Laurence Li Lu-jen, SC
Dr Lo Wai-kwok
Mr Edwin Tong Ka-hung
Mr Adrian Wong Koon-man
Dr William Wong Ming-fung, SC
Secretary for Transport and Housing
Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury
Director-General of Civil Aviation
Chief Executive Officer, Airport Authority (ex officio)

[May 31 deadline for proposals to alter rateable values](#)

The Rating and Valuation Department (RVD) today (May 20) reminded members of the public that proposals to alter the rateable value of properties effective from April 1 this year must be served on the Commissioner of Rating and Valuation by May 31. Proposals served after May 31 would not be accepted.

Proposals should be made on the specified form (R20A) and be delivered by post or in person. The public can also lodge proposals on an electronic form (e-R20A) using the Electronic Submission of Form service provided on the department's website. Proposals sent by fax are not acceptable.

Notwithstanding the lodging of a proposal, rates and rent payers must pay rates and government rent by the last day for payment shown on the demand notes. The RVD will inform the proposers of its decisions before December 1. Any changes in rates and government rent payable resulting from such decisions will date back to April 1 this year and any overpayment will be

adjusted in subsequent demands.

For enquiries, please call 2152 0111 (handled by 1823).