

Press Release

Roll out of 2009 H1N1 vaccine for young adults and children

The 2009 H1N1 vaccine is now ready to be rolled out to children and young adults aged 10 years through 18 years. The Ministry of Health (MOH) and the Health Sciences Authority (HSA) have reviewed the safety of CSL Limited Panvax H1N1 Vaccine in children aged 10 years to 18 years and are satisfied with the safety profile of the product in this age-group. The use of Panvax in children younger than 10 years of age is currently under review and a recommendation would be made soon.

2 Children aged 10 years and above are recommended to receive a single dose of 0.5mL (15mcg) vaccine. This is similar to the current adult dose recommendation.

3 While vaccination is voluntary, it is important to note that vaccine can help to protect people from being infected with the H1N1 influenza virus. An immune response that is expected to be protective against 2009 H1N1 influenza virus can be generated within 2 weeks following vaccination. People who are getting vaccinated should be mindful of this lead time which is needed to build up immunity.

4 As a large number of H1N1 cases had occurred in the younger age groups, we strongly encourage vaccination as they are at higher risk of developing influenza-related complications, especially if they have pre-existing chronic medical conditions e.g. asthma and other chronic lung diseases, heart diseases, epilepsy and other neurological and neuromuscular diseases, kidney diseases, blood disorders or diabetes.

5 Those interested in vaccination for their children could obtain more detailed information on the H1N1 vaccine from their family doctors and make an informed decision. For their convenience, they are also advised to make prior appointments for vaccination with the polyclinics and General Practitioner (GP) clinics (both Pandemic Preparedness Clinics (PPCs) and non-PPCs). The list is available at www.moh.gov.sg.

Availability of Pandemrix (GSK) H1N1 vaccines for adults

6 The adjuvanted H1N1 vaccine from Glaxo-SmithKline (GSK), Pandemrix®, is also now available for the public. Its usage is however recommended for persons aged 18 years old and above only. The ECI has recommended that 1 dose of the vaccine is sufficient.

Pricing of Vaccine

7 The various types of vaccines are supplied at cost to all polyclinics and GP clinics. They have the flexibility to order either Panvax®, CSL or Pandemrix®, GSK vaccines or both depending on the age group to be vaccinated. The public is advised to check with the clinic on the pricing of the vaccine as charges may differ due to differences in administration, inventory and overhead cost of the vaccines. Patients who cannot afford the vaccine can seek assistance from the polyclinics. No one will be denied essential vaccines because of their inability to pay.

8 For more information on the H1N1 vaccine, the public can visit the MOH website at www.moh.gov.sg

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26 NOVEMBER 2009



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