



香港兒科醫學會  
THE HONG KONG PAEDIATRIC SOCIETY

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26<sup>th</sup> March, 2009

Dr Hon Joseph Lee Kok Long  
Room 25, 8/F  
Hing Wan Commercial Building  
25-27 Parkes Street, Jordan, Kowloon

Dear Dr Lee,

Re: Inclusion of pneumococcal conjugate vaccine into the Immunization Programme in HK

The Hong Kong Paediatric Society supports the Government's recent decision to include pneumococcal conjugate vaccine into the Childhood Immunization Programme (CIP) in Hong Kong. We believe that the children of Hong Kong should be provided with all the safe and effective vaccines cost-effectively. In line with WHO recommendations, we strongly support the inclusion of pneumococcal conjugate vaccine into our immunization system, starting from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2009.

We understand that the Food and Health Bureau of Department of Health has been working hard on the implementation details of this new initiative and a lot of follow up work will need to be done after the inclusion of pneumococcal conjugate vaccine into the CIP. The provision of free pneumococcal conjugate vaccine is for children below two years of age. For infants born after 1<sup>st</sup> July 2009, they can receive their four doses of free pneumococcal vaccination together with the other childhood vaccines in the CIP, but a separate system needs to be implemented for the Catch-Up Programme for children born between 1<sup>st</sup> September 2007 and 30<sup>th</sup> June 2009.

The Hong Kong Paediatric Society believes that the following issues need to be addressed if Hong Kong wishes to have a successful Childhood Immunization Programme:

- 1) The inclusion of pneumococcal conjugate vaccine into the CIP will inevitably impose additional work on the existing services of Maternal and Child Health Centres (MCHCs) in Hong Kong. The Government should seriously consider other means to redistribute the workload and support the development of a workable public and private collaboration in the provision of healthcare service.
- 2) From our previous experience, there will always be 10 – 20 % of parents preferring an alternative choice of providers for various reasons and they should not be positively discriminated by this pneumococcal vaccination programme, especially when the cumulative cost of a full course of the vaccine could amount to more than \$ 2000. The government could consider introducing other means to allow the general public to have the freedom of choice in choosing the service provider for immunization.

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- 3) We believe that a successful immunization programme does not only entail inoculation of vaccine. It should also include health education, pre-immunization medical evaluation and post-vaccination follow up should any complication arise. We are strongly against delegating this important work with profound public health implication to auxiliary servicemen without proper medical training.
- 4) It is difficult to improve a service without measuring results. Mandatory reporting of all children who have been vaccinated with the pneumococcal conjugate vaccine and all vaccine adverse events is the single most important key to a successful Childhood Immunization Programme. We can assure you that our members are most willing to cooperate with you in achieving success of this meaningful programme.

In conclusion, the Hong Kong Paediatric Society supports the inclusion of pneumococcal conjugate vaccine into the CIP in Hong Kong and we would like to convey our appreciation for all the efforts made to make this possible. We would like to take this opportunity to offer you our service whenever required and, in future, we can collaborate with you and help to organize discussion forums for healthcare professionals on matters regarding the possible inclusion of other vaccines into the CIP, with an aim to provide the Government with additional professional recommendations.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Yu Chak Man  
President  
The Hong Kong Paediatric Society



Dr Chan Chok Wan  
Chairman of Child Advocacy Committee  
The Hong Kong Paediatric Society