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Malaysian Society of Infectious Diseases
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Senior Consultant Clinical Microbiologist
Malaysian Society of Infectious Diseases
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MEDIA STATEMENT

November 3, 2020

NO REASON TO FEAR FLU VACCINES

Experts Sound Call for Widespread Flu Vaccination After Ministry of Health Malaysia Lifts Temporary Cessation on The Use of Two Flu Vaccines

The Malaysian Influenza Working Group (MIWG) comprises experts working together to improve the prevention, management and control of influenza in Malaysia. We have been concerned over recent news reports alleging deaths following flu vaccination in South Korea.

Although the matter has since been clarified, we would like to take this opportunity to affirm that flu vaccination is safe and also a highly necessary preventive healthcare measure. Thus, we urge healthcare professionals and members of the public, alike, to urgently get their flu shots.

This small step could help avert tremendous physical, emotional and financial suffering resulting from severe flu and related complications. Flu is undesirable at any time, but even more now as all Malaysians face another deadly health threat – the surging COVID-19 pandemic.

The Korean Conundrum

The Ministry of Health (MOH) Malaysia issued an advisory on October 28, 2020, instructing healthcare professionals to temporarily stop using two flu vaccine brands– Vaxigrip Tetra and SKYCellflu Quadrivalent¹. MOH Singapore issued a similar advisory on October 25, 2020².

The advisories occurred after the Korea Disease Control and Prevention Agency (KDCA) reported that a number of people (83 individuals as at October 31, 2020) had died amid the country's ongoing national flu vaccination programme³. Over 16 million individuals had received their flu shots by then⁴.

While 11 of the cases were still being probed (at the time of writing), KDCA's detailed investigations and autopsies revealed that the other 72 deaths were most likely due to underlying diseases and other fatal events. There were no instances of anaphylaxis, an extremely rare but potentially fatal adverse reaction to vaccination.

The South Korean government was satisfied with KDCA's findings and decided to allow the national flu vaccination drive to continue, using all the different influenza vaccines (including Vaxigrip Tetra and SKYCellflu Quadrivalent) in the programme.

MOH Malaysia and MOH Singapore have since rescinded their temporary cessation orders, based on KDCA's investigations and their technical reviews. They have confirmed that both vaccine brands are safe and may continue to be used.

MIWG welcomes the move as it will help restore the public's confidence at a time when flu vaccination is greatly needed.

Flu Vaccines Are Safe

Numerous studies have consistently shown that flu vaccines are safe⁵. This is reflected by the fact that, to date, no flu vaccination-related deaths have been reported in Malaysia¹ or Singapore². In South Korea, the Prime Minister, Health Minister⁶ and other top health officials⁷ have themselves taken their flu shots in recent days to demonstrate their uncompromising faith in flu vaccine safety.

Flu vaccines are well tolerated in most age-groups⁵. However, like all other vaccines, flu vaccines may sometimes cause side effects. In most cases, these side effects are mild, ranging from redness, pain, swelling at injection site, or fever. These adverse effects usually resolve on their own.

Thus, there is no reason to be afraid of flu vaccines. Instead, we should rely on them to help prevent influenza, a disease that afflicts 3 to 5 million people each year with severe illness and complications (such as pneumonia, inflammation of the heart and brain, sepsis, multi-organ damage) with 290,000 to 650,000 respiratory deaths⁸.

Advice for The Public

As recommended by the US Advisory Committee on Immunisation Practices (ACIP), everyone over the age of 6 months old should be protected with a flu shot every year. This is especially important if you belong to any of the following high-risk groups⁹.

Annual flu vaccination in **older persons** aged 50 or more is associated with lower flu hospitalisation rates and flu-related complications and death¹⁰. People living with **chronic health conditions** also stand to benefit.

In heart disease patients, annual flu vaccination may help lower the risk of major cardiovascular events¹¹. In people with diabetes, there is a reduced likelihood of dying from a heart attack or stroke¹². Elderly patients with chronic kidney disease exhibit a lower risk of hospitalisation due to heart failure¹³.

In people with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), annual flu vaccination is associated with a reduction in the number of exacerbations, hospitalisations, outpatient visits, and all-cause and respiratory mortality¹⁴. People with asthma see a reduced frequency of respiratory illness, asthma attacks and other influenza-related asthma complications¹⁵.

Flu shots given to **pregnant women** reduce the risk of flu-induced complications, pre-term labour, premature birth, congenital disabilities and stillbirth¹⁶. Annual flu vaccination protects **youngchildren** aged over 6 months from potentially fatal flu-related complications (such as pneumonia, severe dehydration, and brain dysfunction)¹⁷.

Advice for Healthcare Professionals Amid COVID-19

Flu vaccination has become even more critical as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to rage across the globe. In the current environment, the WHO Strategic Advisory Group of Experts (SAGE) has put healthcare workers among the highest priority groups to be vaccinated against the flu¹⁸.

Getting a flu shot will prevent us from unwittingly spreading the disease to our patients. It will also enable us to support the World Health Organisation's (WHO) call for widespread flu vaccination¹⁹.

Many nations (eg, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, China, Australia, the UK, the USA, and most European countries) have already ramped up their existing national flu vaccination efforts, accordingly^{20,21}. However, without a similar programme of our own in Malaysia, we healthcare professionals will have to do our best to personally and pro-actively advocate flu vaccination to all our patients.

It will help protect them from severe flu and related complications, as well as the unthinkable prospect of getting both flu and COVID-19 at the same time – a disastrous mix that may lead to a 10,000-fold increase in coronavirus replication in human cells, as new research suggests²².

From a health system perspective, widespread flu vaccination will minimise the number of people getting hospitalised for flu, thereby allowing critical yet limited healthcare resources to be reserved for COVID-19 cases.

We are living in uncertain times. However, we can trust that flu vaccination is safe and take advantage of the protection it offers to healthcare professionals and members of the public, alike.

Issued by

MALAYSIAN INFLUENZA WORKING GROUP

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Aligned with the Asia-Pacific Alliance for the Control of Influenza (APACI)**

This media statement is endorsed by:

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Academy of Medicine Malaysia

Asthma Malaysia

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& Society of Occupational and
Environmental Medicine Malaysia

KENYATAAN MEDIA

November 4, 2020

TIADA SEBAB UNTUK TAKUT MENDAPATKAN VAKSIN FLU

Pakar-Pakar Menyeru Pengambilan Vaksinasi Flu Secara Meluas Selepas Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia Membatalkan Pemberhentian Sementara Penggunaan Dua Vaksin Flu

Malaysian Influenza Working Group (MIWG) terdiri daripada pakar-pakar yang bekerjasama untuk meningkatkan pencegahan, pengendalian, dan pengawalan influenza di Malaysia. Kami amat prihatin terhadap laporan berita kebelakangan ini yang mendakwa berlakunya kematian berikutan vaksinasi flu di Korea Selatan.

Walaupun perkara ini telah dijelaskan, kami ingin mengambil kesempatan ini untuk menegaskan bahawa vaksinasi flu bukan sahaja selamat, malah merupakan langkah pencegahan yang amat penting dalam penjagaan kesihatan. Oleh itu, kami menyeru pengamal penjagaan kesihatan serta orang ramai untuk segera mendapatkan vaksin flu.

Tindakan mudah ini boleh membantu mengelakkan penderitaan dari segi fizikal, emosi dan kewangan akibat jangkitan flu yang teruk dan komplikasi berkaitan. Tiada siapa yang ingin dijangkiti flu, apatah lagi dalam keadaan sekarang yang mana kita sedang menghadapi satu lagi ancaman kesihatan yang boleh membawa maut – wabak COVID-19 yang sedang menular.

Kesulitan di Korea

Kementerian Kesihatan Malaysia (KKM) telah mengeluarkan arahan pada 28 Oktober 2020 supaya pengamal penjagaan kesihatan menghentikan sementara penggunaan dua jenama vaksin flu – Vaxigrip Tetra dan SKYCellflu Quadrivalent¹. Arahan yang sama juga dikeluarkan oleh Kementerian Kesihatan Singapura pada 25 Oktober 2020².

Arahan ini dikeluarkan selepas Agensi Kawalan dan Pencegahan Penyakit Korea (KDCA) melaporkan bahawa sejumlah individu (83 orang pada 31 Oktober 2020) telah meninggal dunia semasa program vaksinasi flu kebangsaan sedang dijalankan di negara tersebut³. Lebih 16 juta orang telah menerima vaksin flu di negara tersebut ketika itu⁴.

Walaupun 11 kes masih disiasat (semasa kenyataan ini ditulis), KDCA menjelaskan bahawa siasatan dan autopsi terperinci menunjukkan bahawa besar kemungkinan 72 lagi kematian adalah disebabkan oleh penyakit-penyakit lain yang sedia ada dan punca-punca kematian yang lain. Tiada dilaporkan kejadian anafilaksis, iaitu sejenis tindak balas terhadap vaksinasi yang amat jarang berlaku tetapi boleh membawa maut.

Kerajaan Korea Selatan berpuas hati dengan hasil penemuan KDCA dan telah membuat keputusan untuk membenarkan program vaksinasi flu kebangsaan disambung semula dengan menggunakan pelbagai vaksin influenza yang berbeza (termasuk Vaxigrip Tetra dan SKYCellflu Quadrivalent) di dalam program tersebut.

Sehubungan itu, KKM dan Kementerian Kesihatan Singapura telah menarik semula arahan pemberhentian sementara berdasarkan penyiasatan KDCA dan semakan teknikal yang turut dijalankan kementerian-kementerian tersebut. Mereka telah mengesahkan bahawa kedua-dua jenama vaksin tersebut adalah selamat dan penggunaannya boleh diteruskan.

MIWG menyambut baik keputusan tersebut kerana ia bakal mengembalikan keyakinan orang ramai dalam keadaan semasa tatkala vaksinasi flu amat diperlukan.

Vaksin Flu Adalah Selamat

Pelbagai kajian telah menunjukkan secara konsisten bahawa vaksin flu adalah selamat⁵. Ini terbukti dengan realiti di mana tiada kematian berkaitan vaksinasi flu telah dilaporkan di Malaysia¹ atau Singapura² setakat ini. Di Korea Selatan, Perdana Menteri, Menteri Kesihatan⁶ dan pegawai-pegawai tinggi kesihatan lain⁷ telah mengambil vaksin flu baru-baru ini bagi membuktikan keyakinan mereka yang tidak berbelah bagi terhadap keselamatan vaksin flu.

Vaksin flu dapat diterima dengan baik dalam kalangan kebanyakan kumpulan umur⁵. Namun, seperti semua vaksin lain, vaksin flu adakalanya boleh menyebabkan kesan sampingan. Dalam kebanyakan kes, kesan sampingan ini adalah ringan seperti tanda kemerahan, sakit, bengkak di bahagian yang disuntik, atau demam. Kesan sampingan ini biasanya akan hilang dengan sendiri.

Oleh itu, tiada sebab untuk takut mendapatkan vaksin flu. Sebaliknya, kita mengharapkan vaksin ini dapat membantu mencegah influenza, penyakit yang menjangkiti 3 hingga 5 juta orang setiap tahun dan mengakibatkan pelbagai masalah kesihatan dan komplikasi yang teruk (seperti pneumonia, radang pada jantung dan otak, sepsis, kerosakan berbilang organ) menyebabkan 290,000 hingga 650,000 kematian berkaitan sistem pernafasan⁸.

Nasihat untuk Orang Ramai

Seperti saranan US Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), setiap individu yang berusia 6 bulan ke atas harus dilindungi dengan vaksin flu setiap tahun. Ini amat penting terutamanya jika anda tergolong dalam mana-mana kumpulan berisiko tinggi berikut⁹.

Vaksinasi flu tahunan bagi **individu lanjut usia** iaitu yang berusia 50 tahun atau lebih adalah dikaitkan dengan kadar kemasukan ke hospital akibat flu serta komplikasi dan kematian berkaitan flu yang lebih rendah¹⁰. Mereka yang **menghidap penyakit kronik** juga boleh mendapat manfaat darinya.

Bagi pesakit jantung, vaksinasi flu tahunan boleh membantu mengurangkan risiko masalah utama kardiovaskular¹¹. Bagi penghidap penyakit kencing manis, kebarangkalian kematian akibat serangan jantung atau strok adalah lebih rendah¹². Pesakit buah pinggang kronik yang lanjut usia juga menunjukkan risiko yang lebih rendah terhadap kemasukan ke hospital akibat kegagalan jantung¹³.

Bagi penghidap penyakit pulmonari obstruktif kronik (COPD), vaksinasi flu tahunan dikaitkan dengan pengurangan kadar serangan pernafasan, kemasukan ke hospital, rawatan pesakit luar serta kematian berkait sistem pernafasan dan juga kadar kematian secara keseluruhan¹⁴. Penghidap asma boleh menyaksikan pengurangan kekerapan penyakit berkaitan sistem pernafasan, serangan asma dan komplikasi asma yang bakal dicetus oleh jangkitan influenza¹⁵.

Suntikan flu yang diberikan kepada **wanita hamil** dapat mengurangkan risiko komplikasi yang disebabkan oleh flu, proses bersalin pramatang, kelahiran pramatang, kecacatan serta kematian semasa lahir¹⁶. Vaksinasi flu tahunan melindungi **kanak-kanak** yang berusia lebih 6 bulan daripada komplikasi jangkitan flu yang boleh membawa maut (seperti pneumonia, penyahhidratan teruk dan disfungsi otak)¹⁷.

Nasihat untuk Pengamal Penjagaan Kesihatan dalam Menghadapi Wabak COVID-19

Vaksinasi flu kini menjadi lebih penting apabila wabak COVID-19 terus merebak di serata dunia. Dalam keadaan ini, Kumpulan Pakar Penasihat Strategik WHO (SAGE) telah menetapkan pekerja-pekerja penjagaan kesihatan sebagai kumpulan yang paling tinggi keutamaannya untuk diberikan vaksin flu¹⁸.

Mendapatkan vaksin flu akan mencegah kita daripada menyebarkan penyakit secara tidak sengaja kepada para pesakit. Ia juga membolehkan kita menyokong seruan Pertubuhan Kesihatan Sedunia (WHO) untuk mengamalkan vaksinasi flu secara meluas¹⁹.

Banyak negara (contohnya Jepun, Korea Selatan, Taiwan, China, Australia, United Kingdom, Amerika Syarikat, dan kebanyakan negara Eropah) telah menggiatkan usaha-usaha vaksinasi flu di seluruh negara mereka^{20,21}. Namun tanpa program sedemikian di Malaysia, kita, sebagai pengamal penjagaan kesihatan perlu mengambil inisiatif sendiri dan proaktif dalam menyeru pengambilan vaksin flu kepada semua pesakit.

Langkah ini akan membantu melindungi mereka dari mendapat flu yang teruk dan komplikasi yang berkaitan, serta kebarangkalian menghidap flu dan COVID-19 serentak – suatu gabungan dahsyat yang boleh mengakibatkan sebanyak 10,000 kali ganda replikasi koronavirus dalam sel-sel manusia, sepertimana yang diusulkan dalam kajian terkini²².

Dari perspektif sistem kesihatan, vaksinasi flu secara meluas akan merendahkan jumlah pesakit yang dimasukkan ke hospital akibat flu, seterusnya membolehkan sumber jagarawatan kesihatan yang terhad ditumpukan kepada kes-kes COVID-19.

Kita sedang melalui satu fasa yang penuh ketidakpastian. Walau bagaimanapun, kita boleh meyakini bahawa vaksinasi flu adalah selamat dan memberi manfaat perlindungan kepada pengamal penjagaan kesihatan dan orang ramai yang mengambilnya.

Dikeluarkan oleh:

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Kenyataan media ini disokong oleh:

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Academy of Medicine Malaysia

Asthma Malaysia

College of Physicians – Academy of Medicine Malaysia

Malaysian Family Medicine Specialist' Association

Ikram Health

Immunise4Life

Islamic Medical Association of Malaysia

Malaysian Health Coalition

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Malaysian Paediatric Association

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Rujukan

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Consultant Geriatrician
Malaysian Society of Geriatric Medicine

A/Professor Dr Pang Yong Kek
Senior Consultant Respiratory Physician
Malaysian Thoracic Society

Professor Dr Roslina Abdul Manap
Senior Consultant Respiratory Physician
Malaysian Thoracic Society

Dr Nurhayati Mohd Marzuki
Consultant Pulmonologist
Malaysian Thoracic Society

Dr Hazlee Abdul Hadi
Consultant Physician - Occupational
Health and Safety
Academy of Occupational and
Environmental Medicine Malaysia
& Society of Occupational and
Environmental Medicine Malaysia

媒体声明

2020年11月 04

无须害怕注射流感疫苗

在马来西亚卫生部取消两种流感疫苗的临时禁令后，专家们
呼吁广泛注射流感疫苗

马来西亚流感工作组 (MIWG) 是一个由一群专家组成，以共同改善马来西亚流感预防、治疗和控制的团队。我们对最近报道称韩国有人因流感疫苗注射而死亡的新闻一直都很关注。

我们想借此机会确认流感疫苗不仅安全而且是非常有必要的预防保健措施。因此，我们敦促医疗保健专业人员和公众赶紧注射流感疫苗。

这一小步骤可以帮助避免因严重流感和相关并发症而造成的身体、精神和经济上的痛楚。无论什么时候我们都应该预防流感，现在的情况更是如此，因为所有马来西亚人正面临着另一个致命的健康威胁，一个与日剧增的大流行新冠肺炎 (COVID-19)。

韩国面对的难题

马来西亚卫生部 (MOH) 在2020年10月28日发布了一项指南，指示医疗保健专业人员暂时停止使用两个品牌的流感疫苗 — Vaxigrip Tetra和SKYCellflu Quadrivalent¹。新加坡卫生部也于2020年10月25日发布了类似的指南²。

这项防范指南是基于韩国疾病预防控制局（KDCA）的近期报告。该局的报告称有一部分韩国人在进行中的国家流感疫苗注射计划死亡（截至2020年10月31日，共有83人）³。当时，已有超过1600万人注射了流感疫苗⁴。

在截稿时，尽管还有11个案件有待调查，跟据KDCA的详细调查和尸检报告，72死亡案例很可能是原至于现有疾病或其他致命事件造成的。个案中没有发生过敏反应（anaphylaxis）。过敏反应是一种与疫苗有关，但极为罕见的潜在致命反应。

韩国政府对KDCA的调查结果感到满意，并决定允许该计划继续使用所有不同品牌的流感疫苗（包括Vaxigrip Tetra和SKYCellflu Quadrivalent）进行全国流感疫苗注射。

在审查了相关资料和KDCA报告后，马来西亚卫生部和新加坡卫生部已正式取消了他们的临时禁令，并确认这两个品牌的疫苗都是安全的，可以继续使用。

MIWG对此举表示欢迎，因为这将及时恢复公众对注射流感疫苗的信心。

流感疫苗是安全的

大量研究一致显示，流感疫苗是安全的⁵。迄今为止，马来西亚¹或新加坡²均未报告与流感疫苗相关的死亡案例。在韩国，总理、卫生部长⁶和其他高级卫生官员⁷最近几天都注射了流感疫苗，以表明他们对流感疫苗安全性的坚定信念。

在大多数年龄层中，流感疫苗都没产生不良反应⁵。但是，像所有其他的疫苗一样，流感疫苗有时可能会引起一些副作用。这些副作用大多数都是轻微的，包括注射部位发红、疼痛、肿胀或发烧。这些不良反应通常可以自行消失。

因此，我们无须害怕流感疫苗的反应。相反的，我们应该靠疫苗来帮助预防流感，这种疾病每年导致300至500万人患上严重流感病或其并发症（例如肺炎、心脏和大脑的炎症、败血症、多器官损伤），造成29至65万呼吸道死亡案例⁸。

给公众的建议

根据美国免疫实践咨询委员会（ACIP）的建议，每名6个月或以上的人都应该每年注射流感疫苗以获得保护。如果您属于以下高风险群体，注射流感疫苗尤其重要⁹。

每年对50岁以上的年长者进行流感疫苗注射可降低流感住院率以及与流感相关的并发症和死亡个案¹⁰。患有慢性疾病的人也可从中受益。

心脏病患者如每年进行流感疫苗注射将有助于降低发生重大心血管事件的风险¹¹；糖尿病患者可减少他们死于心脏病发作或中风的可能性¹²；而患有慢性肾脏疾病的老年患者可以降低因心力衰竭而住院的风险¹³。

患有慢性阻塞性肺疾病（COPD）的人，如每年进行流感疫苗注射可减少病情加重、住院、门诊就诊以及呼吸道疾病和任何原因的死亡率¹⁴。哮喘患者的呼吸系统疾病、哮喘发作和其他与流感相关的哮喘并发症的发生率也可下降¹⁵。

孕妇注射流感疫苗可减少因流感引起的并发症，未足月产、早产、先天缺陷和胎死腹中的风险¹⁶。年度流感疫苗注射可保护6个月以上的幼儿免于受到可致命的流感相关并发症（例如肺炎、严重脱水和脑功能障碍）的侵害¹⁷。

在COVID-19期间为医疗保健专业人员提供的建议

随着COVID-

19大流行在全球不断蔓延，流感疫苗的注射变得更为重要。在当前环境下，世卫组织战略咨询专家组（SAGE）已将医护人员列为应注射流感疫苗的最优先人群¹⁸。

注射流感疫苗可防止我们无意间将病毒传播给我们的患者。这也是我们以行动支持世界卫生组织（WHO）呼吁广泛注射流感疫苗的表现¹⁹。

因此，许多国家（例如日本、韩国、台湾、中国、澳洲、英国、美国和大多数欧洲国家）已经加大了其现有的国家流感疫苗注射力度^{20,21}。在马来西亚，我们没有实施类似的计划，但身为医疗保健专业人员的我们还是可以积极为我们所有的患者倡导注射流感疫苗。

这可帮助他们预防严重的流感和相关并发症，以及预防同时患上流感和冠状肺炎的灾难性感染，根据新的研究报告，这可能导致人类细胞中冠状病毒的复制率增加10,000倍²²。

从卫生系统的角度来看，广泛的流感疫苗注射将最大程度地减少因流感住院的人数，从而使有限的关键医疗资源可用于COVID-19病例。

我们生活在不确定的时代，但是，我们可以相信流感疫苗是安全的，而且我们可以利用它为医疗保健专业人员和公众提供保护。

发布单位

MALAYSIAN INFLUENZA WORKING GROUP

**A Special Interest Group under the Malaysian Society of Infectious Diseases & Chemotherapy
Aligned with the Asia-Pacific Alliance for the Control of Influenza (APACI)**

马来西亚流感工作组

马来西亚传染病与化学治疗协会下属的特殊利益团体

与亚太地区流感控制联盟 (APACI) 结盟

本媒体声明得到以下组织的认可：

Academy of Family Physicians of Malaysia

Academy of Medicine Malaysia

Asthma Malaysia

College of Physicians – Academy of Medicine Malaysia

Malaysian Family Medicine Specialist' Association

Ikram Health

Immunise4Life

Islamic Medical Association of Malaysia

Malaysian Health Coalition

Malaysian Medical Association

Malaysian Paediatric Association

Malaysian Public Health Physicians' Association

Malaysian Society of Geriatric Medicine

Malaysian Society of Infectious Diseases and Chemotherapy

Malaysian Thoracic Society

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