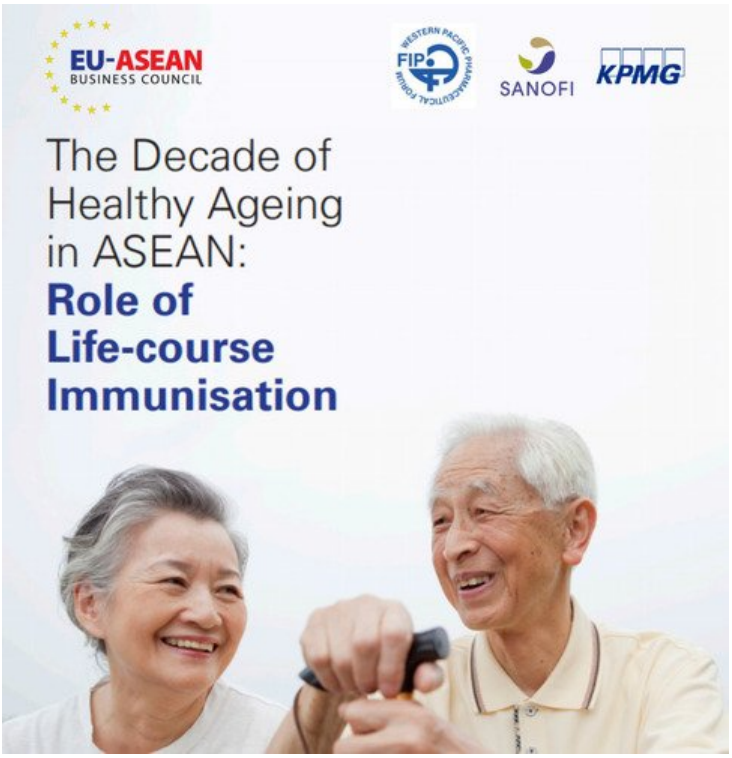
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Experts suggest expediting life-course immunization in SEA to promote healthy aging

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Singapore experts unravel the study report Ã¢â?¬â?? Ã¢â?¬Å?The Decade of Healthy Ageing in ASEAN: Role of Life-Course ImmunisationÃ¢â?¬Â•



The EU-ASEAN Business Council, KPMG in Singapore, and Sanofi, with the support of the Western Pacific Pharmaceutical Forum (WPPF), on June 29, 2021 published a new report – “The Decade of Healthy Ageing in ASEAN: Role of Life-Course Immunisation” – unveiling healthy ageing barriers in Southeast Asia and calling for an urgent and greater focus on the implementation of life-course immunization.

With age, the immune function goes into decline, increasing older people’s susceptibility to infectious diseases such as the flu and pneumonia, which can manifest into other health risks and complications. Vaccination remains one of the most cost-effective interventions available to protect against infectious diseases.

Despite the obvious benefits, Southeast Asia lags the rest of the world when it comes to life-course immunisation – falling significantly short of the 75% immunisation target rate set by the World Health Organisation.

John Jackson, President of the WPPF said, “Today’s report provides a starting point for governments across the region to implement incremental policy changes that can further empower healthy ageing and economies.”

The report's recommendations, contributed to by experts from across the region, include:

- Recognising life-course immunisation as an important part of healthy ageing and dedicating resources to implementing this as part of healthy-ageing policies
- Engaging the expertise and knowledge of healthcare providers and leveraging their influence to be advocates for life-course immunisation
- Supporting grassroots efforts to share relevant narratives around the efficacy and safety of vaccines, as well as to help bridge the digital gap among the elderly to access information and other matters related to vaccination
- Improving public access to vaccination points, to make sure that people who want to be vaccinated can do so at their convenience – at locations with minimal disruption to their daily routines
- Private sector support through inclusion of annual vaccination in employee benefit programmes and development of insurance products by health insurers that help cover vaccination costs

"While we are living longer, we are not necessarily living healthier," said Chris Humphrey, Executive Director of the EU-ASEAN Business Council. "This report shows us the dividends that we can harness by better ensuring a healthier, more productive older working population. Southeast Asia needs to start planning now to ensure that we take the right policy action – including preventative care."