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PUTRAJAYA (July 5): For the time being, only children aged 12 to 17 years old with underlying medical problems will be vaccinated, said National Covid-19 Immunisation Programme (PICK) Coordinating Minister Khairy Jamaluddin.

He said the technical group of the Covid-19 Vaccine Supply Access Guarantee Special Committee (JKJAV) had been directed to compile the latest information on the risks of myocarditis and pericarditis on young people after they are vaccinated.

"We feel that by the time we finish phase three of PICK, we will have enough data to determine whether to proceed with vaccinating children with Pfizer or Sinovac.

"At the moment, it will be given to those with underlying medical conditions involving a small group," he told a joint press conference with Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Adham Baba on the progress of the PICK here today.

Dr Adham said vaccination for young people would focus on high-risk categories, namely immunocompromised children, cancer patients and those with chronic lung diseases and comorbidities such as heart disease and diabetes.

He said adolescents who are at higher risk of severe Covid-19 due to chronic underlying medical conditions could benefit from the Pfizer vaccine, while the healthy

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Bernama

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ones who are at very low risk of serious Covid-19 would be offered vaccination at a later stage, taking into consideration the results of an ongoing clinical trial using a lower dosage of the Pfizer vaccine in children.

Asked if the dose given to children and teenagers would be the same as the adults, Dr Adham said experts are still assessing clinical data based on the age of individuals, but he suggested that the dose should be reduced for young people and different from adults.

As of June 29, he said, 116,378 children in Malaysia were confirmed Covid-19 positive and, of those, 37,205 were aged between 13 and 17.

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