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**ONLY PFIZER FOR UNDER-17 EVEN THOUGH ALL COVID-19
VACCINES SAFE, PARLIAMENT TOLD**

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BY RADZI RAZAK



A health officer administers the Pfizer-BioNTech Covid-19 vaccine to a student at Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Sultan Sulaiman in Kuala Terengganu, September 21, 2021. — Bernama pic

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 23 — The government will ensure that adolescents will receive only the Pfizer vaccine which have been shown to have the most effective protection against Covid-19 in clinical trials, Science, Technology and Innovation Minister Datuk Seri Dr Adham Baba said today.

He was responding to Jelutong MP RSN Rayer who sought the government's assurance following the nationwide immunisation programme for 12 to 17-year-olds this week.

"Yes we will give Pfizer, Yang Berhormat. We launched on September 20 and today we started to give across the country because Pfize's clinical data shows effectiveness to children," Dr Adham said in his ministerial winding-up in the Dewan Rakyat.

Rayer said global opinion showed Pfizer was more effective than Sinovac, developed by China.

The Opposition MP also asked the government why Pfizer was available to elected representatives but not the general public and suggested that public funds be used to secure future supply of the US brand instead of others.

Dr Adham gave an assurance that all brands of the Covid-19 vaccine were safe for the general public.

“Elected representatives get Pfizer because in February we got the earliest Pfizer supplies we could procure,” he told Rayer.

He added that the other two earliest brands available back then when the government started the national Covid-19 immunisation programme were Sinovac and British brand AstraZeneca, which have proven to be effective.

He said that those who contract the viral disease after vaccination have shown only mild symptoms.

“Even if you get infected after being vaccinated, you would not get to Category Five from Category One,” Dr Adham added.

Category Five are Covid-19 patients who require hospitalisation in intensive care and intubation while Category One display no symptoms associated with the disease.

Kepong MP Lim Lip Eng also asked the minister to detail the cost for Malaysia to make its own Covid-19 vaccine, which is expected to be ready in 2024.

Dr Adham replied that the project under the National Institutes of Biotechnology Malaysia will be carried out in a few phases starting next year at an estimated cost of RM20 million.