

Protecting the Longevity Boom: Adult Immunization in **China**

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

1 Extend free influenza vaccination for adults 60+ to more provinces.

Zhejiang and Shenzhen fund the influenza vaccine with high coverage returns, and the Disease Prevention and Control Plan asks local governments to carry its immunization commitments into their 2026-2030 work targets.¹

2 Add the vaccine offer to the free annual health check.

The National Basic Public Health Services Programme's free annual check reaches most residents 65 and over, and the DPCP 2026-2030 plan can lead to that visit ending with a vaccination for COVID, shingles, influenza, and RSV.^{2,3}

3 Publish adult vaccination coverage each year.

Provincial disease control centers collect the data, and the plan's electronic vaccination certificate is designed to share them across regions.⁴

IMPACT OF THESE CHANGES

19x1

Adult Vax Return
on Investmentⁱ

30-60%

Reduced Risk of
Heart Attackⁱⁱ

3-6

Lost Work Days
Prevented by
Adult Vaxⁱⁱⁱ



WHY IT MATTERS

Vaccinating older adults reduces hospital admissions, keeps older adults and their caregivers healthy and independent, and helps manage non-communicable diseases that are common later in life.

CURRENT POLICY LANDSCAPE

China has a platform that can be expanded: free human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination nationally since November 2025⁵, showing interest that can lead to nationally funded COVID-19, RSV, and Shingles vaccines for older adults. Other examples are the free influenza programs for older residents exist in Zhejiang and Shenzhen with high coverage and a basic public health service package includes vaccination for nationally funded and recommended vaccines^{6,7}. The Disease Prevention and Control Plan for 2026-2030 commits to immunization for older and younger people alike and includes a plan to build a national surveillance network for respiratory infections, which could include RSV, COVID, and influenza.⁸

KEY FINDINGS

1

Influenza's toll falls on older adults.

Around 71,000 of China's influenza-associated respiratory deaths each year are among people aged 60 and over, four in five total.⁸

2

The opportunity is rarely presented.

In a survey across ten provinces, only 13.9% of older adults said a health worker had recommended a vaccination.⁹

3

Coverage is measured city by city.

Published figures for adults 60 and over range drastically between cities, with no national total.¹⁰

DISEASE & VACCINE SNAPSHOT*

DISEASE	CASES (RECENT)/ NO AGE REPORT	AVAILABILITY	NATIONAL RECOMMENDATION/ FUNDING
RSV	Not notifiable	Undergoing Approval	-None; adult vaccine under review since Feb 2026
COVID-19	1,554,677 (2025)	Available 2021	-Provinces moving to class II self-paid
Influenza	17,053,244 (2025)	Seasonal	-Adults 60+ prioritized; self-paid nationally, free in some provinces
Shingles	Not notifiable	Available 2025	-Adults 50+; self-paid nationally, free in some provinces

ABOUT AP-CHAAI

The Asia-Pacific Consortium for Healthy Aging and Adult Immunization (AP-CHAAI) is a network of healthy aging and economics experts working with global partners to close the data and policy gaps that keep preventive care from delivering its full value. ap-chaai.org



References

- 1 - Government of China. (2026). China unveils disease prevention, control plan. *The State Council*. https://english.www.gov.cn/policies/latestreleases/202607/08/content_WS6a4e3b90c6d00ca5f9a0c128.html
- 2 - D. Zhao, et al. (2022). The effect of health check-ups on health among the elderly in China: Evidence from 2011–2018 longitudinal data. *International Journal of Public Health*. <https://doi.org/10.3389/ijph.2022.1604597>
- 3 - Government of China. (2026). China unveils disease prevention, control plan. The State Council. https://english.www.gov.cn/policies/latestreleases/202607/08/content_WS6a4e3b90c6d00ca5f9a0c128.html
- 4 - Government of Shanghai (2026). A guide to getting an electronic vaccination certificate_service guide. (2026). *Shanghai.Gov.Cn*. <https://english.shanghai.gov.cn/enServiceGuide/20250805/f646b0751d35486f8f2eab2acb167c9a.html>
- 5 - D. Jiang, et al (2026). Integrating human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine into China's national immunization program: Global lessons and strategic considerations. *Preventive Medicine Reports*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pmedr.2026.103590>
- 6 - J. Xie, et al (2026). Analysis of influenza vaccination status and health information sources among middle-aged and older adults with multiple chronic diseases in Zhejiang, China: A cross-sectional study. *Frontiers in Public Health*. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2025.1719412>
- 7 - L. Liu, et al. (2025). Equity of national essential Public Health Services (NEPHS) in mainland China, 2019: A cross-sectional study based on the NEPHS database. *Globalization and Health*. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12992-025-01101-y>
- 8 - L. Li, et al. (2019). Influenza-associated excess respiratory mortality in China, 2010–15: A population-based study. *The Lancet*. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S2468-2667\(19\)30163-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2468-2667(19)30163-X)
- 9 - Z. Hou, et al. (2022). Influenza vaccination hesitancy and its determinants among elderly in China: A national cross-sectional study. *Vaccine*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.vaccine.2022.06.063>
- 10 - H. Zhang, et al. (2022). Coverage and Equity of Childhood Vaccines in China. *JAMA Network Open*. <https://doi.org/10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2022.46005>
- i - Office of Health Economics. (2024). Adult vaccination programmes deliver socio-economic benefits up to 19 times initial investment, according to new report. *OHE*. <https://www.ohe.org/news/adult-vaccination-delivers-19-times-investment/>
- ii - Global Coalition on Aging. (2026). Adult immunization for healthy workforces and healthy economies in an aging world. *Global Coalition on Aging*. https://globalcoalitiononaging.com/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/GCOA_Vaccines-and-Productivity_InfographicA4_FINAL-SINGLE-PAGE.pdf
- iii - National Foundation for Infectious Diseases. (2019). 10 Reasons to get vaccinated. *National Foundation for Infectious Diseases*. <https://www.nfid.org/immunization/10-reasons-to-get-vaccinated/>

*Data in the disease burden and vaccine snapshot table is AP-CHAAI's estimate based on publicly available and verifiable government sources. Data relies on sentinel surveillance and the true burden is likely higher.