

## **SFH to attend inauguration of Macao Academy of Medicine in Macao**

At the invitation of the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture of the Macao Special Administrative Region, the Secretary for Food and Health, Professor Sophia Chan, will depart for Macao tonight (July 12) to attend the Inauguration of Macao Academy of Medicine cum Fellowship Conferment Ceremony to be held tomorrow (July 13).

Before attending the inauguration, Professor Chan will witness the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine and the Macao Academy of Medicine to strengthen co-operation between the two academies.

The Director of Health, Dr Constance Chan, will also attend the ceremonies. They will return to Hong Kong tomorrow afternoon.

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## **Appointment to Advisory Committee on Post-service Employment of Civil Servants**

The Government announced today (July 12) that the Chief Executive has re-appointed Mr Vincent Lo Wing-sang as Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Post-service Employment of Civil Servants (ACPE) for a term of two years from September 1, 2019, to August 31, 2021.

The Chief Executive has appointed Mr Cheng Yan-kee and Mrs Betty Yuen So Siu-mai as members of the ACPE for a term of two years from July 14, 2019, to July 13, 2021.

The Chief Executive has also re-appointed Mr Herbert Tsoi Hak-kong as member of the ACPE for a term of two years from July 14, 2019, to July 13, 2021, and Mr Walter Chan Kar-lok as well as Mrs Ava Ng Tse Suk-ying as members for a term of two years from September 1, 2019, to August 31, 2021.

The Government has expressed its sincere appreciation to the retiring members, Mr Francis Mok Gar-lon and Ms Melissa Wu, for their invaluable contributions to the work of the Committee.

The ACPE advises the Government on matters relating to the post-service employment of civil servants. Other serving members are Mr Thomas Ho On-sing,

Professor Wong Sze-chun and Mr Stanley Wong Yuen-fai. Its secretariat support is provided by the Joint Secretariat for the Advisory Bodies on Civil Service and Judicial Salaries and Conditions of Service.

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## Effective Exchange Rate Index

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Friday, July 12, 2019 is 104.8 (same as yesterday's index).

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## CFS announces results of targeted surveillance on Bacillus cereus and Clostridium perfringens in ready-to-eat food

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (July 12) announced the results of a recently completed targeted food surveillance project on *Bacillus cereus* and *Clostridium perfringens* in ready-to-eat food. All samples passed the test.

"A total of 300 samples of ready-to-eat food were collected from different retail outlets including online retailers and food factories for testing of *Bacillus cereus* and *Clostridium perfringens* this year. The samples included dim sum, rice, noodles, pastries, soya products, stewed meat and meat sauce," a spokesman for the CFS said.

*Bacillus cereus* is commonly found in the environment. It can form spores which are able to resist heat and survive cooking temperatures. *Bacillus cereus* can produce different toxins causing two types of food poisoning. Emetic intoxication (causing vomiting) is caused by heat-stable toxins in food; another type of poisoning is diarrhoeal, which is caused by ingestion of a large amount of *Bacillus cereus* that can produce toxins in the intestine. As the production of preserved bean curd requires fermentation, *Bacillus cereus* will multiply when production is not hygienic or storage is not proper.

Cooking heat can activate the germination of *Clostridium perfringens* spores, which survive in anaerobic conditions like inside internal cavities, rolls of meat, stuffed poultry, or gravies. The organism can then multiply in

the area where oxygen level is low. Cooling of food at ambient temperature for a long period also allows rapid multiplication of the bacterium. Hence, foods prepared in bulk, especially cooked meat, poultry dishes and juices, which are stored at ambient temperatures with a long cooling period after cooking are at high risk. In food poisoning caused by *Clostridium perfringens*, common symptoms include sudden abdominal pain, nausea and diarrhoea.

The spokesman reminded the trade and the public not to take the risk lightly. They should always maintain good personal and food hygiene to ensure food safety. When handling food that is not to be consumed immediately, keep it at a safe temperature (above 60 degrees Celsius or at 4 degrees C or below). Consume perishable prepackaged food and beverages promptly after opening or reheating and avoid prolonged storage at ambient temperatures. Reheat food thoroughly with the core temperature at 75 degrees C or above. If cooked foods are to be cooled, the trade should adopt measures to shorten the required cooling time to restrict the growth of *Bacillus cereus* and *Clostridium perfringens* in heat treated food. For example, install specific rapid chilling equipment, divide food into smaller portions and place it in shallow containers and in an ice bath. They should also closely monitor the refrigerator temperature and maintain a temperature log. Cross-contamination of food during cooling and storage should be prevented. The trade should also observe the Good Hygienic Practices in each stage of production to ensure safe and proper processing of the food and to comply with the limits stipulated in the Microbiological Guidelines for Food.

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