

# Primary Healthcare Office established

The Food and Health Bureau (FHB) announced today (March 1) the establishment of the Primary Healthcare Office (PHO) to oversee and steer the development of primary healthcare services at the bureau level.

A spokesman for the FHB said, "It is high time for us to actively promote primary healthcare services to change the present treatment-oriented healthcare system. The PHO will focus on the development of District Health Centres (DHCs) as a new model to leverage on public-private partnership and medical-social collaboration in providing primary healthcare service, to cater for the needs and characteristics of the districts and enhance public awareness of healthy living, disease prevention and self-management of health."

The first DHC in Kwai Tsing is expected to start operation around the third quarter of this year. With the experience gained from the first DHC, the PHO will plan and set up DHCs in all 18 districts progressively.

"The PHO will be responsible for monitoring the performance of DHC operators and driving DHC service development based on evidence and data as well as developing standards. It is also tasked to review the role of different key service providers in primary healthcare and to enhance cross-sectoral and inter-organisational co-ordination, as well as to oversee development and promotion strategies on primary healthcare," he said.

While the PHO will spearhead the overall development of primary healthcare services, the Primary Care Office (PCO) in the Department of Health will continue to perform a complementary role to support the PHO on matters relating to the development and updating of the reference framework for primary care setting and maintenance, promoting the use of the Primary Care Directory, and promotion of the family doctor concept and/or family medicine practice. The PCO will also support the PHO in setting up the DHC system.

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## Suspected puffer fish poisoning case under CHP investigation

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (March 1) investigating a suspected puffer fish poisoning case, and hence reminded members of the public not to consume puffer fish.

The case involved a 69-year-old woman, who developed perioral numbness,

generalised weakness, vomiting and respiratory failure about 30 minutes after consuming cooked puffer fish caught by her husband in local waters, for dinner at home yesterday (February 28).

She attended the accident and emergency department of Tin Shui Wai Hospital on the same day and was subsequently transferred and admitted to the intensive care unit of Tuen Mun Hospital for further management. She is now in a serious condition.

Investigations by the CHP are continuing.

A spokesman for the CHP said that consumption of puffer fish is the main cause of food poisoning from tetrodotoxin. Tetrodotoxin is a potent water-soluble neurotoxin that can affect the central nervous system.

"Organs such as the liver, gonads and skin of puffer fish have high concentrations of tetrodotoxin. Being heat-stable, the toxin does not decompose upon cooking, boiling, drying or freezing. Tetrodotoxin intoxication can cause problems in respiration or circulation and is potentially fatal. There is no known antidote or antitoxin. Members of the public are advised to avoid purchasing and preparing puffer fish or unknown fish for consumption to prevent tetrodotoxin-related food poisoning," the spokesman said.

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## Temporary closure of some facilities at Tseung Kwan O Sports Ground and Hong Kong Velodrome

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) announced today (March 1) that some facilities at the Tseung Kwan O Sports Ground (TKOSG) and Hong Kong Velodrome (HKV) in Sai Kung District will be temporarily closed to tie in with the staging of the 3rd Asian Youth Athletic Championships at the TKOSG between March 15 and 17. Details are as follows:

TKOSG

Facility	Period of temporary closure
Main sports ground	From March 10 to 6pm on March 19
Secondary sports ground	From March 10 to 6pm on March 18
Activity room (L)	From 1pm on March 10 to March 17

Activity room (S)	From 4pm on March 10 to March 17
Table tennis table no. 1	March 10 to 21
Table tennis table no. 2, 3 and 7	March 10 to 17
Table tennis table no. 4 – 6	March 10 to 20
All facilities (including Leisure Link self-service kiosk)	March 12 to 17

HKV

Facility	Period of temporary closure
Table-tennis table no. 1 – 6	From 1pm on March 13 to March 18
Activity room no. 1 – 3	

During the closure periods, members of the public may use similar facilities at Sai Kung Tang Shiu Kin Sports Ground, Hang Hau Sports Centre, Tseung Kwan O Sports Centre, Tiu Keng Leng Sports Centre, Tsui Lam Sports Centre and Po Lam Sports Centre in the same district.

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## Update on number of dengue fever cases

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (March 1) reported the latest number of cases of dengue fever (DF), and again urged the public to maintain strict environmental hygiene, mosquito control and personal protective measures both locally and during travel.

From February 22 to 28, the CHP recorded two imported DF cases. The patients had been to Malaysia (both cases epidemiologically linked to a case recorded last week) during the incubation period.

As of yesterday (February 28), 28 cases had been confirmed this year, all of which were imported cases. The cases were mainly imported from Indonesia (seven), Malaysia (seven), Sri Lanka (four) and Thailand (four).

DF remains endemic in some areas of Asia and beyond. The latest figures for 2019 revealed that 7 350 cases had been recorded in Thailand, 1 728 in Singapore (since December 30, 2018) and 36 in Japan. In the Americas, the latest figures indicated that 4 674 cases were filed in Mexico in 2019.

The public should take heed of the following advice on mosquito control:

- Thoroughly check all gully traps, roof gutters, surface channels and

drains to prevent blockage;

- Scrub and clean drains and surface channels with an alkaline detergent compound at least once a week to remove any deposited mosquito eggs;
- Properly dispose of refuse, such as soft drink cans, empty bottles and boxes, in covered litter containers;
- Completely change the water of flowers and plants at least once a week. The use of saucers should be avoided if possible;
- Level irregular ground surfaces before the rainy season;
- Avoid staying in shrubby areas; and
- Take personal protective measures such as wearing loose, light-coloured, long-sleeved tops and trousers and apply insect repellent containing DEET to clothing or exposed parts of the body when doing outdoor activities.

To reduce the risk of infections spread by mosquitoes, apart from [general measures](#), travellers returning from areas affected by DF and Zika virus infection should apply insect repellent for 14 days or at least 21 days respectively upon arrival in Hong Kong. If feeling unwell, seek medical advice promptly and provide travel details to the doctor. DEET-containing insect repellents are effective and the public should take heed of the tips below:

- Read the label instructions carefully first;
- Apply right before entering an area with risk of mosquito bites;
- Apply on exposed skin and clothing;
- Use DEET of up to 30 per cent for pregnant women and up to 10 per cent for children\*;
- Apply sunscreen first, then insect repellent; and
- Re-apply only when needed and follow the instructions.

\* For children who travel to countries or areas where mosquito-borne diseases are endemic or epidemic and where exposure is likely, those aged 2 months or above can use DEET-containing insect repellents with a DEET concentration of up to 30 per cent.

The public may refer to the CHP's [tips for using insect repellents](#) for details.

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## Meetings of Legislative Council Committees

The following is issued on behalf of the Legislative Council Secretariat:

The Legislative Council (LegCo) Committees will hold four open meetings and a public hearing during the week from March 4 to 8 in the LegCo Complex. Details of the meetings are available in the meeting schedule attached.

The information in the meeting schedule is subject to change. Please refer to the "LegCo Calendar" on the LegCo Website ([www.legco.gov.hk](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) for the latest details of meetings.

Members of the public are welcome to observe open meetings of LegCo Committees. Interested individuals and groups are advised to make advance booking of seats by calling the LegCo Secretariat at 3919 3399 during office hours. Members of the public can also listen to or watch all open meetings via the "Webcast" system on the LegCo Website.