

## **Hospital Authority response on hepatitis E outbreak incident**

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

In response to media enquiries, the Hospital Authority (HA) spokesperson today (August 28) responded as follows:

The HA expressed its concern on the findings of the Microbiology Department of the University of Hong Kong yesterday (August 27) regarding the possible transmission of hepatitis E from a deceased donor, and will establish an expert group to review the findings with a view to further enhancing the safety of organ transplant services and the care of transplant patients.

The expert group, comprising microbiologists, hepatologists, organ transplant and infection disease experts, will assess the effectiveness and feasibility of introducing screening of hepatitis E in organ donors. While the known risk of acquiring infectious diseases during organ transplant can never be completely eliminated, the expert group will consider the protocol of post-transplant clinical management of organ recipients if hepatitis E infection is identified in an asymptomatic organ donor.

Meanwhile, the four recipients of the heart, liver and two kidneys have been informed of the latest findings and appropriate antiviral treatment have commenced. The hospitals concerned will closely monitor the condition of the four patients who are currently in a stable condition. Three of them have already discharged. The case of the deceased lung recipient will be referred to the coroner for further follow-up.

The HA would also like to thank the organ donor again for her contribution and has informed her family on the latest findings.

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## **Scientific Committee discusses local dengue fever situation and reviews prevention and control strategy (with photo)**

The Scientific Committee on Vector-borne Diseases (SCVBD) under the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) met today

(August 28) to review the latest situation of local dengue fever (DF) and the Government's prevention and control measures.

Members noted that as of yesterday, 26 confirmed local DF cases have been recorded this year. Based on the CHP's epidemiological investigations, two sources of infection, namely Lion Rock Park and Cheung Chau, have been identified.

At the meeting, representatives from the CHP and Food and Environmental Hygiene Department presented to members the prevention and control measures carried out by the Government in response to the recent outbreak. Members reiterated the importance of isolating confirmed patients in mosquito-free environments during their febrile period to prevent potential transmission of dengue viruses to mosquitoes. In addition, they acknowledged that the prompt and intensive anti-mosquito operations carried out at this critical moment have been effective in preventing further spread of DF. They also agreed that the intensive anti-mosquito measures must be continued in the coming months in all districts to prevent DF from taking root in Hong Kong.

The Controller of the CHP, Dr Wong Ka-hing, said, "Apart from the Government's prevention and control measures, the prevention of secondary spread of DF as well as the carrying out of anti-mosquito measures by members of the public are equally important.

"Scientific studies have shown that infected persons can transmit the virus to mosquitoes through mosquito bites even if they remain asymptomatic or before their onset of symptoms, leading to further spread of the disease. People who have visited Lion Rock Park should be advised to apply insect repellent for 14 days after their last visit, and those with DF symptoms should seek medical advice as early as possible. Meanwhile, people who reside in or visit Cheung Chau should also be advised to apply insect repellent during their stay and continue applying for 14 days after their last day of stay to prevent infection and secondary spread.

"We will take on board experts' views in reinforcing ongoing prevention and control measures. The CHP will closely monitor the local situation and revise its response if necessary," Dr Wong said.

The CHP has provided [information](#) and [locations of the residences and local movements](#) of the local DF cases on the CHP's designated webpage for DF to facilitate handy access to the outbreak information for the public.

The public should call 1823 in case of mosquito problems and may visit the DF pages of the [CHP](#) and its [Travel Health Service](#), the latest [Travel Health News](#), [tips for using insect repellents](#), the [CHP Facebook Page](#) and [YouTube Channel](#), and the FEHD's [Guidebook on Control and Prevention of Mosquito Breeding](#) for more information.



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## [HKMA reminds public about bogus phone calls purported to be from banks](#)

The following is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority:

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) today (August 28) wishes to remind members of the public to stay vigilant to bogus phone calls purported to be from banks. These calls may lure members of the public to open investment accounts, transfer funds to the accounts designated by the callers, provide sensitive personal information or follow callers' other instructions by claiming seemingly legitimate reasons (for example, irregularities detected in their bank or credit card accounts, promoting products that they are interested in with attractive offers).

The HKMA urges members of the public to take precautionary steps to authenticate the calls with the relevant banks rather than just take the word of the callers without verifying their identity. Since 2015, a list of all retail banks' hotline numbers for such verification purpose has been posted at the dedicated webpages of the HKMA ([www.hkma.gov.hk/media/eng/doc/other-information/Bank\\_hotline\\_for\\_verify\\_caller\\_identity\\_ENG.pdf](http://www.hkma.gov.hk/media/eng/doc/other-information/Bank_hotline_for_verify_caller_identity_ENG.pdf)) and the Hong Kong Association of Banks ([www.hkab.org.hk/DisplayArticleAction.do?sid=5&ss=14](http://www.hkab.org.hk/DisplayArticleAction.do?sid=5&ss=14)). These hotline numbers have been conveniently and effectively used by the public for verifying the identity of callers. In view of the continued occurrence of bogus phone calls, members of the public should continue to use the relevant hotlines to verify the authenticity of the calls.

Any member of the public who has fallen to, or suspects that he/she has fallen to, similar scams should immediately contact the bank concerned and report such cases to any Police Station or the Hong Kong Police Force at 2860 5012.

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## **Cluster of Human Metapneumovirus cases in Siu Lam Hospital**

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The spokesperson for Siu Lam Hospital made the following announcement today (August 28):

Five patients (aged 45 to 66) and a staff member in a male ward for severe intellectual disability presented with respiratory symptoms since August 21. Appropriate viral tests were arranged for the patients and the test results for four patients were positive for Human Metapneumovirus. The patients concerned are being treated under isolation with stable condition. The staff member is currently on leave.

Admission to the ward has been suspended and restricted visiting has been imposed. Infection control measures have already been stepped up according to established guidelines. All other patients in the ward are under close surveillance.

The cases have been reported to the Hospital Authority Head Office and the Centre for Health Protection for necessary follow-up.

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## **SLW visits elderly and rehabilitation facilities (with photos)**

The Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Dr Law Chi-kwong, visited elderly and rehabilitation facilities today (August 28) and met with Tuen Mun District Council (TMDC) members.

He first called at Chi Lin Care and Attention Home (C&AH) and Chi Lin Day Care Centre for the Elderly in Diamond Hill at noon and visited elderly persons. The medical centre in the C&AH arranges for doctors to provide consultation and health checks for residents. Dental clinics are also available for oral care and dental treatment. Apart from providing personal care, rehabilitation exercises, health education and carers' support for elderly clients, the Day Care Centre also arranges self-care, cognition, behavioural and psychological training to help dementia patients slow down mental deterioration and improve their quality of life.

The Day Care Centre is a Recognised Service Provider under the Pilot Scheme on Community Care Service Voucher for the Elderly. The Government will increase service vouchers under the Second Phase of the Pilot Scheme to a total of 6 000 from October 2018 onwards to enhance "ageing in place" support for elderly persons with moderate or severe impairment. The Social Welfare Department is inviting eligible non-governmental organisations, social enterprises and private organisations to submit application for joining the scheme by August 31.

Accompanied by the Under Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Mr Caspar Tsui, and the District Social Welfare Officer (Tuen Mun), Mr Ricky Yu, Dr Law went to Tuen Mun Long Stay Care Home of the New Life Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association in the afternoon and visited patients with chronic mental illness. The care home provides residential services, care, mental rehabilitation and life skills training for patients in stable condition who still require care, so as to facilitate their integration into the community gradually.

He toured various facilities and learnt more about the multi-disciplinary care services provided by care attendants, social work personnel and nurses. He noted that the care home was equipped with an anti-wandering system, which helps elderly residents to avoid getting lost, and a ceiling hoist system, which assists residents with impaired mobility to go to the toilet or bath. In addition, physiotherapists and occupational therapists at the care home introduced physical training technology to arouse trainees' interest and enhance the effectiveness of therapy.

Dr Law said the ageing of persons with disabilities increases the demand for rehabilitation and residential services, and the use of gerontechnology can better address increasingly complex care needs and reduce the burden on care staff. In addition, he added, the Government has allocated additional resources this year to strengthen care for ageing rehabilitation service users.

After the visit, Dr Law met with TMDC members to discuss labour and welfare matters.



