

Public hospitals daily update on COVID-19 cases

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

As at 9am today (August 3), 78 COVID-19 confirmed patients were discharged from hospital. So far a total of 2 037 patients with confirmed or probable infection have been discharged.

At present, there are 675 negative pressure rooms in public hospitals with 1 256 negative pressure beds activated. A total of 1 243 confirmed patients are currently hospitalised in 19 public hospitals and a community isolation facility, among which 43 patients are in critical condition, 49 are in serious condition and the remaining 1 151 patients are in stable condition.

The Hospital Authority will maintain close contact with the Centre for Health Protection to monitor the latest developments and to inform the public and healthcare workers on the latest information in a timely manner.

Details of the abovementioned patients are as follows:

| Patient condition | Case number |
|-------------------|--|
| Discharged | 1307, 1345, 1405, 1657, 1715, 1765, 1772, 1778, 1783, 1794, 1821, 1826, 1831, 1842, 1845, 1846, 1887, 1969, 1972, 2031, 2041, 2049, 2051, 2052, 2087, 2101, 2106, 2141, 2152, 2154, 2162, 2164, 2167, 2177, 2191, 2195, 2199, 2223, 2255, 2263, 2272, 2307, 2327, 2348, 2366, 2369, 2411, 2423, 2435, 2449, 2472, 2476, 2483, 2493, 2501, 2542, 2567, 2599, 2605, 2610, 2615, 2654, 2664, 2724, 2733, 2808, 2850, 2881, 2967, 2991, 3009, 3028, 3159, 3167, 3226, 3241, 3256, 3399 |
| Critical | 595, 1401, 1424, 1470, 1491, 1602, 1650, 1679, 1718, 1767, 1777, 1779, 1806, 1835, 1940, 1955, 1989, 2007, 2048, 2086, 2133, 2161, 2172, 2269, 2282, 2396, 2408, 2479, 2484, 2792, 2842, 2942, 2951, 2955, 2966, 2988, 3153, 3170, 3307, 3366, 3367, 3372, 3434 |
| Serious | 1498, 1573, 1795, 1805, 1843, 1952, 1956, 1968, 1998, 2033, 2078, 2079, 2143, 2148, 2288, 2315, 2316, 2334, 2358, 2362, 2405, 2412, 2422, 2452, 2458, 2560, 2576, 2577, 2591, 2595, 2650, 2671, 2746, 2748, 2769, 2789, 2894, 2912, 2940, 2941, 3005, 3025, 3038, 3105, 3284, 3317, 3411, 3473, 3486 |

Latest arrangements for REO public services

In view of the local epidemic situation and the Government's reintroduction of the special work arrangements for government employees, the Registration and Electoral Office (REO) announced today (August 3) the latest arrangements for its public services.

The following offices will be temporary closed from tomorrow (August 4) until further notice:

- * The REO enquiry counter (located at 10/F, Harbour Centre, 25 Harbour Road, Wan Chai);
- * The REO enquiry counter (located at 13/F, Kowloonbay International Trade & Exhibition Centre, 1 Trademart Drive, Kowloon Bay);
- * The REO enquiry counter (located at 23/F, Millennium City 6, 392 Kwun Tong Road, Kwun Tong); and
- * The Electoral Information Centre (located at 13/F, Kowloonbay International Trade & Exhibition Centre, 1 Trademart Drive, Kowloon Bay).

The REO will maintain the following services:

- * The REO hotline at 2891 1001 will maintain limited services from 8.45am to 6pm, Monday to Friday; and
- * Limited service for inspection of the final registers for geographical constituencies, functional constituencies (other than the District Council (second) functional constituency) and Election Committee subsectors as promulgated earlier on July 17 will be provided at the REO office at 13/F, Kowloonbay International Trade & Exhibition Centre.

SED's opening remarks at media session (English translation)

Following is the English translation of the opening remarks by the Secretary for Education, Mr Kevin Yeung, at a media session at the Central Government Offices today (August 3):

In view of the development of the COVID-19 epidemic, the Education Bureau (EDB) has earlier announced that schools would not resume classes earlier than August 17. Today, I would like to announce the latest arrangements for class commencement for schools.

It is anticipated that the epidemic will continue for some time, and may

straddle the whole summer vacation. Many schools and parents hope that students could resume learning after the holidays. In view of this, the EDB has decided that schools, including international schools and kindergartens that generally commence schooling in August as well as primary, secondary and special schools that commence in September, may commence the new school year in accordance with their originally scheduled dates. That said, in view of the severity of the epidemic, all face-to-face classes and on-campus activities will have to be suspended until further notice, and schools may switch to other modes, including online learning, to let students study at home. The aforementioned arrangements are also applicable to schools offering non-formal curriculum, including tutorial schools.

Although students will not return to schools for lessons for the time being, after the commencement of the new school year, schools should remain open to accommodate students who have to go back to school because of a lack of care at home. Schools should ensure adequate staffing to look after these students, and to handle schools' basic and essential administrative affairs as well as parents' enquiries.

As a matter of fact, schools have accumulated considerable experience in helping students learn at home during the past few months of class suspension. We trust that schools should be able to facilitate home learning via different modes in the new school year. The EDB will continue to provide the necessary assistance to schools.

As for the support for underprivileged students to learn online, the EDB has issued a letter to schools today to reiterate that in view of the epidemic, the Community Care Fund assistance project has, starting from March, made flexible arrangements to accept all public sector primary and secondary schools that implement e-learning to apply for purchasing mobile computer devices for eligible students. I hope that schools can plan ahead and apply for funding from the Fund for needy primary and secondary school students as early as possible. I hereby appeal to schools to lend mobile computer devices to students for use at home, while awaiting approval for their application. In addition, the Government also provides Internet access subsidies to help needy students of eligible families to make use of basic Internet services provided by fixed or mobile telecommunications service operators in the market. As for individual needy students who are unable to obtain appropriate Internet services due to the constraints of their living environment, the EDB will discuss with schools on the flexible use of different subsidies to purchase mobile data cards and portable Wi-Fi routers (also known as "Wi-Fi eggs"), and lend them to the needy students for e-learning at home. The EDB will make reference to the information provided by the schools, such as the utilisation of different subsidies, to formulate relevant support measures.

I would also like to emphasise that e-learning is not the only means for learning at home, in particular for young kindergarten students. Simple worksheets or reading tasks could be more effective, and can at the same time protect the eyes of young children. The EDB has issued the Reference Principles on Supporting Students' Home Learning with E-learning Modes During

Class Suspension on March 31, as well as a letter to kindergartens on May 11, with a view to setting out the principles and strategies of supporting children's learning at home for school stakeholders' reference.

Some teachers and school staff may return to school to prepare for their online classes or perform other related duties. Schools should suitably and appropriately arrange their manpower based on the principle of avoiding large gatherings. Staff returning to the school campus should maintain appropriate social distance among one another and put in place all the necessary anti-epidemic preventive measures.

The EDB will continue to closely monitor the development of the epidemic, take into account professional advice from health experts and maintain close liaison with the school sector. When the epidemic subsides, we will announce the dates and the arrangements for class resumption as soon as possible.

I would like to once again thank all schools, parents and students for their efforts made over the past few months. They have been flexible, adaptive and agile in coping with the changing situation of the epidemic. The epidemic situation may still be unstable in the future. The EDB will continue to closely collaborate with various sectors to fight the epidemic and make the most appropriate learning arrangements for students.

I would also like to take this opportunity to urge parents and students to stay healthy during our fight against the epidemic, maintain a healthy lifestyle, and stay at home as far as possible. If going out is unavoidable, please be reminded to put in place all the anti-epidemic protective measures, such as wearing masks and maintaining social distance. To succeed in the fight against the epidemic, we need the concerted efforts of all sectors of the community. We must work together, fulfil our own responsibilities, and strictly observe anti-epidemic discipline. With these efforts we will soon put an end to the epidemic. People can then resume their normal lives and students can return to school campuses for learning early.

Thank you.

Import of poultry meat and products from Golden Plains Shire of state of Victoria in Australia suspended

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department announced today (August 3) that in view of a notification from the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) about an outbreak of highly

pathogenic H7N7 avian influenza in the Golden Plains Shire of state of Victoria in Australia, the CFS has instructed the trade to suspend the import of poultry meat and products (including poultry eggs) from the area with immediate effect to protect public health in Hong Kong.

A CFS spokesman said that Hong Kong imported about 170 tonnes of chilled poultry meat, 870 tonnes of frozen poultry meat and 1.8 million poultry eggs from Australia in the first six months of this year, according to the Census and Statistics Department.

"The CFS has contacted the Australian authorities over the issue and will closely monitor information issued by the OIE on the avian influenza outbreaks. Appropriate action will be taken in response to the development of the situation," the spokesman said.

To Kwa Wan Market to close early today for deep cleaning and disinfection

The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) today (August 3) announced that in view of a newly preliminary confirmed case of coronavirus disease 2019 found to be related to To Kwa Wan Market, to safeguard the health and safety of market stall tenants and the public, the FEHD has immediately cleaned and disinfected the areas the patient has used. The market will be closed an hour earlier today at 7pm for deep cleaning and disinfection.

During the period, FEHD staff will thoroughly clean and disinfect communal areas and facilities in the market, and call for co-operation of market tenants to conduct cleaning and disinfection at their respective stalls, with a view to improving the overall hygiene condition of the market. In addition, the FEHD will carry out deep cleaning work at the periphery of the market and nearby streets. The cleaning and disinfection work is expected to last about four hours.

A spokesman for the FEHD said, "The FEHD attaches importance to the hygiene conditions of public markets. In addition to regular cleaning work in the daytime, market service contractors also conduct thorough cleaning in all markets after the markets are closed every day. During this epidemic period, the FEHD has already stepped up cleaning and disinfection of communal areas and facilities in the markets, including toilets, escalators, elevators and stair handrails with diluted household bleach regularly every day. Disinfectant hand sanitisers are also provided in the markets for public use.

"Moreover, starting from late July, the FEHD has progressively arranged a voluntary one-off free COVID-19 testing service for staff of market stalls

and personnel working in markets. No online registration is required. The FEHD works closely with the testing agency to determine the priority of various markets with reference to a risk-based approach and manpower resources. The FEHD is in close liaison with the Centre for Health Protection and has been distributing specimen bottles to markets with confirmed cases involving operators of market stalls or personnel working therein since the implementation of the scheme. This includes distributing specimen bottles to operators of market stalls or personnel working in To Kwa Wan Market on August 1."

The FEHD will continue to closely monitor the situation of each market, and will conduct deep cleaning and disinfection work in other markets if necessary so as to maintain environmental hygiene.