

CS inspects preparatory work for quarantine and community treatment facilities at AsiaWorld-Expo (with video)

The Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Matthew Cheung Kin-chung, today (July 23) inspected the preparatory work at AsiaWorld-Expo for setting up quarantine and community treatment facilities.

Accompanied by Deputy Secretary for Food and Health (Health) Mr Fong Ngai; the Assistant Director of Social Welfare (Family and Child Welfare), Ms Pang Kit-ling; and the Director (Quality and Safety) of the Hospital Authority, Dr Chung Kin-lai, Mr Cheung called at the halls for setting up a temporary quarantine centre for residents of residential care homes for the elderly and a community treatment centre. He was briefed on the progress of the preparatory work, including inspection of the ventilation system and procurement of beds and other necessary equipment.

Mr Cheung said he was pleased to learn that the temporary quarantine centre for residents of residential care homes for the elderly will have nursing staff on duty round the clock and designated staff responsible for assisting in the daily living of the elderly. Preparation for the first hall, which will have 100 beds, is almost complete, and it can be put to use tomorrow (July 24) at the earliest. The second hall, with a capacity of about 150 to 200 beds, will be reserved for future expansion.

"The epidemic situation has been worsening in the past two weeks, with 884 confirmed cases recorded (from July 10 to 23), and with soaring numbers of local infection cases and the emergence of confirmed cases in residential care homes for the elderly.

"To get better prepared, the Government decided to set up in AsiaWorld-Expo the additional temporary quarantine centre for residents of residential care homes for the elderly and a community treatment facility to supplement existing facilities," he said.

He pointed out that there is a need to set up a designated temporary quarantine centre for residents of residential care homes for the elderly. He said it is inappropriate to arrange for those with special medical needs to be sent to general quarantine centres after being identified as close contacts of confirmed patients.

As for the community treatment facility, it will admit clinically suitable patients that fulfil the relevant criteria, so as to relieve the pressure for isolation beds in public hospitals, allowing public hospitals to concentrate on treating patients who are in a more serious condition.

He also thanked colleagues of the Food and Health Bureau, the Social Welfare Department, the Department of Health and the Hospital Authority for their efforts through day and night in the preparatory work so that the temporary quarantine centre can be put into operation in the shortest amount of time.

In addition, he said that to curb the spread of the disease, the Government has also rolled out various measures in the past days. Among them, the Government will conduct virus tests for four high-risk groups, including staff members of residential care homes for the elderly or for persons with disabilities and nursing homes, to strengthen detection in the community for identification of asymptomatic patients.

"The prolonged battle against the epidemic is undoubtedly a very difficult one that requires the public to stay at home as much as possible for a long period, wear masks indoors and outside, and maintain social distance. This is absolutely not a time to drop our guard," Mr Cheung stressed.

He reminded Hong Kong people to avoid going out, having social contact and dining out. They should put on a surgical mask and maintain stringent hand hygiene.

He also urged the elderly to stay home as much as possible and avoid going out. They should consider asking their family and friends to help with everyday tasks such as shopping for basic necessities.

Latest arrangements for services of EPD

In light of the latest development of the COVID-19 epidemic, the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) announced today (July 23) that the department will continue to adjust the service arrangements until further notice. The detailed arrangements are as follows:

(1) Counter and license application services of the EPD's regional offices will continue to be temporarily suspended. Members of the public may place the application documents in the drop-in box located at the regional offices during office hours (9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday), or submit the application online or by post. The EPD will continue to process all license applications as normal.

(2) Members of the public can place their applications for vehicle exhaust and noise emissions compliance/exemption with relevant documents in the drop-

in box located at the EPD's office at 34/F, Revenue Tower, 5 Gloucester Road, Wan Chai during office hours (9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday). The applicants will be informed of the collection arrangement of the approved letters.

(3) Members of the public can submit their applications and submissions under the Environmental Impact Assessment Ordinance to the EPD's office located at 27/F, Southorn Centre, 130 Hennessy Road, Wan Chai during office hours (9am to 12.30pm and 1.30pm to 5pm, Monday to Friday).

(4) Members of the public can submit applications for non-road mobile machinery online (nrmm.epd.gov.hk/application/common/home), and registrations and enquiries for the "Waste Cooking Oils" Scheme by email (wco_admscheme@epd.gov.hk) or by post (address : Waste Reduction and Recycling Section (4), Environmental Protection Department, 5/F, Centre Parc, 11 Sheung Yuet Road, Kowloon Bay).

(5) For the Construction Waste Disposal Charging Scheme, members of the public may call 2872 1838 for application of an account; call 2872 1854 or 2872 1856 for chits application and billing account enquiry; or email to enquiry@epd.gov.hk for both enquiries. The telephone service is adjusted as 9am to 12.30pm and 1.30pm to 3pm every Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

(6) For Waste Transfer Service Accounts, members of the public may call 2872 1704 or email to rts@epd.gov.hk for enquiries. The telephone service is adjusted as 9am to 12.30pm and 1.30pm to 5pm every Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

(7) The instant call answering service of the EPD's general customer service hotline will continue to be suspended. Members of the public can make enquiries by leaving voice messages via the hotline (2838 3111) or by email (hq-hotline@epd.gov.hk).

Regarding EPD facilities, the WEEE•PARK visitor centre, T•PARK visitor centre, EcoPark visitor centre, Environmental Resource Centres and the facilities at restored landfills will continue to be temporarily closed. All Community Green Stations remain open to collect recyclables, while visitor and education programmes, and kerb side collection service will continue to be suspended until further notice.

[Prince of Wales Hospital announces a renal patient has been preliminarily tested positive for COVID-19 after](#)

discharge

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The spokesperson for the Prince of Wales Hospital today (July 23) announced that a renal patient has been preliminarily tested positive for COVID-19 after discharge:

A 46-year-old female renal patient received peritoneal dialysis training at the hospital's Integrated Renal Care Centre from July 13 to July 15. On July 15, the patient presented with fever and was admitted to the enhanced surveillance ward. COVID-19 test was arranged and the test result was negative. The patient had peritonitis and she was transferred to the general medical ward for treatment on the same day.

The patient was later discharged from the hospital and transferred to an elderly home on July 21. She attended the Accident & Emergency Department of the Alice Ho Miu Ling Nethersole Hospital (AHNH) due to fever and sore throat on July 22. COVID-19 test was conducted and the result was positive. She is currently being treated under isolation at AHNH in stable condition.

After being notified of the case, the hospital has immediately suspended patient admission to the medical ward in which the patient had stayed and has arranged thorough cleansing and disinfection of the ward. The infection control team has conducted contact tracing and confirmed that nine patients had stayed in the same cubicle with the infected patient and these patients are identified as close contacts. Four of the patients who are still hospitalised have been transferred to isolation wards. COVID-19 tests have been arranged and the test results were all negative. The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) will follow up on the necessary tests and quarantine arrangements for the remaining five patients who have been discharged.

Another patient attended peritoneal dialysis training with the infected patient from July 13 to July 14 at the same centre. He and his wife are also identified as close contacts. Necessary tests and quarantine will be arranged by CHP.

Hospital staff had been wearing appropriate personal protective equipment in accordance with the infection control guidelines while providing treatment and care to the patient. No staff member has been identified as a close contact. As a precautionary measure, the hospital has arranged virus tests and medical surveillance for colleagues concerned.

The patient had been living with her family before admission and one of her family members was tested positive for COVID-19 on July 22. It is believed that the infection is community-acquired.

During her hospital stay, the patient had been wearing face mask, had not received high-risk medical procedures nor shared medical equipment with

other patients. The infection risk is assessed to be low.

The hospital will closely follow up on the condition of patients and staff and communicate with CHP.

HKSAR Government deplores and opposes UK Government's interference in Hong Kong affairs

The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) made the following solemn statement today (July 23) in response to the announcement by the Government of the United Kingdom (UK) on providing a pathway for the Chinese nationals in Hong Kong who are holders of the British National (Overseas) (BN(O)) passport or eligible for it to reside and obtain citizenship in the UK.

China resumed the exercise of sovereignty over Hong Kong on July 1, 1997. Hong Kong is a special administrative region of China. When the Sino-British Joint Declaration was signed, the Chinese Government and the UK Government exchanged memoranda in which the UK clearly pledged not to confer the right of abode in the UK on holders of the BN(O) passport who are Chinese nationals in Hong Kong. In fact, the UK government had all along had no intent to confer the right of abode in the UK on people in Hong Kong as reflected in various amendments in its laws or policies before Hong Kong's return to China. Given the history, it is hypocritical for the UK to deliberately violate its pledge made in the British memorandum associated with the Sino-British Joint Declaration paying no regard to the Chinese firm opposition and repeated representations, and insist on using the BN(O) passport or status which some people in Hong Kong still hold for political maneuver on the pretext of changing the policy to provide a route for relevant persons to reside and obtain citizenship in the UK. The HKSAR Government deplores and opposes such move of the UK.

Since the establishment of the HKSAR, the Central People's Government has been upholding and implementing the principle of "One Country, Two Systems". The HKSAR enjoys a high degree of autonomy in accordance with the Basic Law of the HKSAR of the People's Republic of China, and has maintained prosperity and stability. National security falls squarely under the purview of the Central Authorities. The enactment of the Law of the People's Republic of China on Safeguarding National Security in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (National Security Law) is constitutional, lawful, rational and reasonable. Matters of the HKSAR remain our Country's internal affairs. No other state is allowed to interfere in such internal affairs under any pretext.

Taking account of the historical background and the existing circumstances of Hong Kong, the Central People's Government has all along permitted the Chinese nationals in Hong Kong who were born before June 30, 1997 to use the BN(0) passport as a travel document for the purpose of travelling to other states and regions. Since the UK violates its pledge in the first place, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs announces today that China will consider not recognising the BN(0) passport as a valid travel document and reserve the right to take any further measure. The HKSAR Government is in support of this and will follow up accordingly.

Currently, no matter they hold BN(0) passport or not, Chinese nationals in Hong Kong who use the HKSAR passport to travel to other states and regions enjoy not only consular protection and services rendered by our Country but also immigration facilitation. At present, 168 countries and territories have granted visa-free access or visa-on-arrival to HKSAR passport holders. The Immigration Department has issued nearly six million HKSAR passports which are still within their validity period to facilitate the travelling of relevant persons in Hong Kong.

The HKSAR Government spokesman solemnly points out, "The high-profile measures taken by the UK Government on the pretext of the National Security Law are purely made out of political maneuver. They not only seriously violate the UK's own pledge, but also seriously interfere in the affairs of the HKSAR. The UK Government has made it an issue again on BN(0) passport after its unilateral announcement to suspend its agreement with Hong Kong for the surrender of fugitive offenders. The HKSAR Government deplores and opposes such moves of the UK, and urges the UK Government to stop interfering in the affairs of the HKSAR and return to the normal tracks."

[Sick person in custody dies in public hospital](#)

A sick 80-year-old male person in custody at Siu Lam Psychiatric Centre died in a public hospital today (July 23).

The person in custody suffered from cholangiocarcinoma and sepsis. He required continuous medical care and follow-up at the institution hospital and a public hospital. On July 18, he was sent to a public hospital for treatment due to physical discomfort. During hospitalisation, his condition deteriorated and he was certified dead at 4.57pm today.

The case has been reported to the Police. A death inquest will be held by the Coroner's Court.

The person in custody was convicted for the offence of manslaughter and detained under a hospital order for treatment.