

Government to provide medical consultation to HA's chronic disease patients living in Guangdong under COVID-19 epidemic

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government announced the launch of the Special Support Scheme for chronic disease patients of the Hospital Authority (HA) residing in Guangdong Province starting from tomorrow (November 10). The Special Support Scheme aims to provide those patients with subsidised medical consultation under the COVID-19 epidemic.

Under the compulsory quarantine measures currently in force, some Hong Kong residents residing in Guangdong Province are unable to travel back and forth between Hong Kong and the Mainland for scheduled medical consultations at the outpatient clinics under the HA as they had done so previously. To ensure that the health conditions of these patients can be effectively monitored and taken care of in a continued and co-ordinated manner, the Government has appointed the University of Hong Kong-Shenzhen Hospital (HKU-SZH) to take up subsidised follow-up consultations for patients with scheduled appointments at designated Specialist Outpatient Clinics (SOPC) or General Outpatient Clinics (GOPC) under the HA.

The Special Support Scheme covers the majority of SOPC and GOPC services, namely anaesthesiology (pain clinic only); cardiothoracic surgery; clinical oncology; ear, nose and throat; eye; gynecology; medicine; neurosurgery; obstetrics; orthopaedics and traumatology; paediatrics, and surgery. Episodic illnesses, inpatient or day inpatient, and Accident and Emergency Departments services are not included.

HA patients with follow-up appointments at the HA's SOPCs or GOPCs between February 17, 2020, and July 31, 2021, may submit applications to the HKU-SZH along with the required supporting documents. Upon patients' consent, the HA will assist the HKU-SZH to verify the identity of the patients with their privacy fully protected during the process. Moreover, to ensure that appropriate treatments are provided for, patients may register for the Electronic Health Record Sharing System (eHRSS) through the HKU-SZH and make a data access request to the Electronic Health Record Office with authorisation for the HKU-SZH to receive copies of the medical records on their behalf. The medical records will be used by relevant healthcare staff in providing appropriate healthcare services.

Eligible patients under the Scheme are required to co-pay RMB100 as a consultation fee per each designated outpatient service at the HKU-SZH (except for specified persons whose medical fees would be waived upon verification by the HA). The rest of the medical fees are subsidised under the Special Support Scheme subject to a cap of RMB2,000 per patient.

The Special Support Scheme will be open for application at the HKU-SZH starting from tomorrow. Eligible persons may receive medical consultations at the HKU-SZH before July 31, 2021, or until the lapse of the quarantine requirement in both Hong Kong and the Mainland (whichever is earlier). The HKU-SZH will accord priority in arranging consultations for patients whose medical appointments are overdue. The Scheme aims to provide an alternative choice for medical services to the patients who are staying in Guangdong Province and unable to return to Hong Kong due to the epidemic situation. It is up to the patients to decide whether to join the Scheme. Such decisions will not affect their appointments previously made with the HA for follow-up medical services.

Details of the Scheme are available at the HA's website (www.ha.org.hk/goto/sss/en) or the HKU-SZH's website (www.hku-szh.org/en/index.html). For enquiries, please call the HA (tel: 2300 7070) between 9am and 6pm from Mondays to Fridays, excluding weekends and public holidays, or the HKU-SZH (tel: (+86) 0755-86913101) from 8am to 12.30pm and 2pm to 5.30pm on Mondays to Fridays, excluding weekends and public holidays.