

Hospital Authority concerned about recent unfortunate incidents involving psychiatric patients

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The Hospital Authority (HA) expressed its serious concern for the recent unfortunate incidents involving psychiatric patients while expressed its deepest condolences to the families of the deceased and the affected citizens. The HA will spare no effort to support citizens in need, hoping the members of the public can soon be healing from the pain and getting out of the haze of the unfortunate incidents. To be in line with government policies, the HA will review the treatments, rehabilitation services and procedures currently provided to psychiatric patients with an aim to enhance psychiatric services; maintain close communication with the Advisory Committee on Mental Health and other stakeholders related to psychiatric services to explore how to address issues related to mental health in Hong Kong in a more integrated, safe and holistic manner; and provide appropriate support to patients in need in response to the different demand for psychiatric services in the community.

The HA has always attached great importance to the needs of psychiatric patients with commitment to providing appropriate psychiatric services. The HA appeals to the members of the public to always pay attention to the mental health of yourself and your family and friends. If needed, one should seek medical or professional help as soon as possible so as to proceed with professional assessment and psychiatric treatment at the earliest which can effectively improve mental health and prevent deterioration of conditions.

The Chairperson of the Coordinating Committee in Psychiatry, Dr Anna Wu, said, "Having regard to patients' severity of the condition and clinical needs and risks, the multidisciplinary teams provide appropriate community support to patients, including mental health assessment, symptom management, relapse prevention, medication management, crisis intervention, stress management, physical and mental health education and etc." Dr Wu added that, through regular outreach and home visits, as well as close collaboration with community partners, case managers will assist patients in setting goals and recovery-oriented plans to facilitate their reintegration.

The representative of the Coordinating Committee in Psychiatry, Dr Bonnie Siu, appeals to the public to join hands with healthcare professionals to facilitate the rehabilitation and reintegration of patients with mental illness through strengthening support and understanding and reducing stigmatisation. Dr Siu said, "Most of the stable mental patients who have recovered from mental illness can reintegrate into our society. Those with violence tendency are a minority, and serious attacks on strangers are very rare. We hope the public will not stigmatise mental patients."

Currently, the HA provides psychiatric services in a team approach. A multidisciplinary team of professionals (including doctors, nurses, clinical psychologists, occupational therapists and medical social workers etc.) would consider the severity of patient conditions and clinical needs to provide holistic and comprehensive medical services, including inpatient and outpatient services, ambulatory rehabilitation training, and community support. Among them, psychiatric outpatient clinics has implemented triage arrangements to ensure patients with urgent conditions who need earlier diagnosis and treatment receive priority follow-up and treatment.