

Queen Elizabeth Hospital closely monitors indoor air quality

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

Subsequent to an incident that occurred in the vicinity of Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH), some hospital staff reported discomfort after inhalation of tear gas. The hospital has been closely monitoring the indoor air quality since then.

The hospital has temporarily suspended intake of fresh air for the ventilation system at specific areas, sealed off windows and turned on the indoor air curtains and more to reduce air infiltration. Portable air purifiers have been deployed to individual wards in need.

Beginning today (November 19), the hospital has arranged environmental cleaning, starting with Paediatric and Obstetrics & Gynaecology wards as the priority areas. In addition, the hospital has started replacing the air filters of the ventilation system and the medical compressed air system.

The hospital is maintaining close communication and continuing to provide staff members with necessary support including shuttle bus service and overnight accommodation. The Staff Clinic will provide support to staff feeling discomfort as a result of being affected by tear gas.

The hospital has been closely monitoring the clinical services. Some elective surgeries have been re-arranged due to staff sick leave. The patients concerned have been notified. The traffic disruptions yesterday (November 18) also affected the Non-Emergency Ambulance Transfer Services (NEATS). The NEATS returned to normal this morning. As the hospital wards are still congested, the Fire Service Department has diverted non-emergency patients to nearby hospitals from last night to noon today.

While the Hospital Authority (HA) understands that the incident occurred unexpectedly, it has reflected the concerns of the Authority and staff members towards tear gas via the two-tier communication channel with the Police.

The HA and QEH appreciate the understanding and co-operation from the affected patients and staff members.