

Second patient transferred point to point to Hong Kong for treatment by direct cross-boundary ambulance transfer in GBA

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The Hospital Authority (HA) announced today (January 27) that Tuen Mun Hospital (TMH) received the second patient under the Pilot Scheme for Direct Cross-boundary Ambulance Transfer in the Greater Bay Area (Pilot Scheme) yesterday afternoon. The patient was transferred to Hong Kong for treatment by a point-to-point cross-boundary ambulance. The HA expresses sincere gratitude to various units in Guangdong and Hong Kong for their proactive co-ordination and collaboration, which enabled the smooth point-to-point transfer of the patient to Hong Kong.

A patient was previously admitted to the University of Hong Kong-Shenzhen Hospital (HKU-SZH). After thorough assessment and discussion with patient and family by the medical team, it was decided to transfer the patient back to Hong Kong for ongoing treatment. The patient departed from the HKU-SZH at 2.00pm yesterday and arrived at TMH before 3.00pm, where he is currently receiving treatment and is in stable condition.

The spokesperson for the HA stated that upon receiving notification, TMH promptly communicated with the medical team in Shenzhen to understand the patient's clinical situation and prepare for admitting the patient. The HA expresses heartfelt thanks to all parties involved for their substantial co-ordination and co-operation, ensuring that the patient was swiftly transported directly point to point to Hong Kong for treatment under the care of medical personnel. Without the handover of patients between ambulances at boundary control points, the direct transport not only minimise the risks posed to patients during transfers and improve the patients' chances of recovery, but also exemplifies that the close collaboration and development of quality healthcare co-operation in the Greater Bay Area (GBA) supports Hong Kong patients residing in the GBA.

The spokesperson emphasised that the Pilot Scheme has a mechanism in place to avoid abuse while ensuring the safety of cross-boundary transfer. Doctors at the sending hospital will assess the clinical diagnosis and condition of the patients to determine the necessity for cross-boundary inter-hospital transfer for continuous treatment or recovery services. In general, taking patients safety into consideration, the Pilot Scheme will only facilitate the transfer of emergency patients who have clinical needs, are unable to cross the boundary independently, and whose clinical conditions are stable. Patients who are clinically unstable cannot participate in the scheme. The medical teams from both regions will jointly evaluate cases, exchange information, and co-ordinate to decide whether to initiate the

transfer mechanism, ensuring that both the patients and their family are informed of the relevant arrangements and the risks involved in the transfer.

The study on the provision of land-based cross-boundary transfers for non-emergency and non-critically ill patients and the exploration of rolling out a pilot co-operation scheme for cross-boundary referrals of patients between designated public hospitals were put forward in the Outline Development Plan for the GBA. The Chief Executive also put forward in his 2023 Policy Address the initiative to explore cross-boundary ambulance transfer arrangements between hospitals in the GBA. Under the staunch support and guidance of various national ministries as well as the concerted efforts of the government departments of Hong Kong, Guangdong and Macao, the Pilot Scheme was set for official launch on November 30 last year. The first patient was transferred point to point from Shenzhen to Hong Kong for treatment by direct cross-boundary ambulance on January 10 this year.