

## Public hospitals daily update on COVID-19 cases

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

As at noon today (February 23), public hospitals had reported to the Department of Health the admission of 32 patients (14 male and 18 female, aged 22 to 98) in the past 24 hours who met the reporting criteria of COVID-19. Appropriate tests have been arranged for the patients.

There are 99 patients under isolation currently. So far, 12 patients who had COVID-19 infection have been discharged upon recovery.

The Hospital Authority will maintain close contact with the Centre for Health Protection to monitor the latest developments and to inform the public and healthcare workers on the latest information in a timely manner.

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## Suspected MERS case reported

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (February 23) reported a suspected case of Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS), and again urged the public to pay special attention to safety during travel, taking due consideration of the health risks in the places they visit. The case is detailed below:

Sex	Female
Age	51
Affected area involved	Dubai, United Arab Emirates
High-risk exposure	Camel ride
Hospital	Queen Mary Hospital
Condition	Stable
MERS-Coronavirus preliminary test result	Negative

"Travellers to the Middle East should avoid going to farms, barns or markets with camels; avoid contact with sick persons and animals, especially camels, birds or poultry; and avoid unnecessary visits to healthcare facilities. We strongly advise travel agents organising tours to the Middle East to abstain from arranging camel rides and activities involving direct

contact with camels, which are known risk factors for acquiring MERS Coronavirus (MERS-CoV)," a spokesman for the CHP said.

Locally, the CHP's surveillance with public and private hospitals, with practising doctors and at boundary control points is firmly in place. Inbound travellers and members of the public who recently visited the Middle East and developed relevant symptoms within 14 days will be classified as suspected MERS cases. They will be taken to public hospitals for isolation and management until their specimens test negative for MERS-CoV.

Travellers to affected areas should maintain vigilance, adopt appropriate health precautions and take heed of personal, food and environmental hygiene. The public may visit the MERS pages of the [CHP](#) and its [Travel Health Service](#), MERS statistics in [affected areas](#), the CHP's [Facebook Page](#) and [YouTube Channel](#), and the World Health Organization's [latest news](#) for more information and health advice. Tour leaders and tour guides operating overseas tours are advised to refer to the CHP's [health advice on MERS](#).

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## **[CEDB responds to media enquiries on Local Mask Production Subsidy Scheme](#)**

In response to media enquiries regarding details of the Local Mask Production Subsidy Scheme under the Anti-epidemic Fund, a spokesman for the Commerce and Economic Development Bureau today (February 23) said the following:

"We have not set the purchase price at \$3 per mask. That price is only an assumption for estimating the budget for undertaking to buy the masks for the entire scheme, so as to seek funding approval from the Legislative Council. The Government and the Hong Kong Productivity Council are devising a mechanism to determine a reasonable purchase price for buying the masks produced under the scheme. We will take into consideration the production costs, such as the cost of raw materials and factory rental. The Government will announce the formula for determining the purchase price later. As the production costs may change over the year, we will not rule out setting different purchase prices for different periods of the year.

"To be eligible for a subsidy from the Government, a production line must satisfy a number of stringent conditions, including having a clean room in the factory, having production machinery and raw materials for producing at least 500 000 masks every month, the masks meeting at least the American Society for Testing and Materials Level 1 standard, and the factory obtaining ISO 13485 certification. The Hong Kong Productivity Council will provide technical support to organisations interested in establishing production

lines in Hong Kong.

"A subsidy of up to \$3 million may be given to each production line and up to \$2 million to each additional production line in the same factory. This is merely the maximum subsidy level but not a subsidy amount across the board. The actual subsidy amount for each production line depends mainly on its production capacity. The principle is that the higher the production capacity, the more the subsidy. The Government and the Hong Kong Productivity Council are studying the subsidy criteria having regard to the capital cost of establishing a production line, and will publicise the details later.

"The Government reiterates that the only policy objective of the scheme is to facilitate the establishment of mask production lines in Hong Kong as soon as possible, so as to stabilise the supply of masks in the short term and to build up stock to meet future need in the long run.

"The Government welcomes applications from all organisations interested in establishing mask production lines in Hong Kong. The Government will scrutinise every application in an open, fair and transparent manner in accordance with the aforementioned requirements and other factors under the scheme."

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## **Sick person in custody dies in public hospital**

A sick 92-year-old male person in custody at Stanley Prison died in a public hospital today (February 23) morning.

The person in custody suffered from heart disease, hypertension and carcinoma of colon. He required continuous medical care and follow-up at the institution hospital and public hospital. On February 5, he was sent to a public hospital for treatment due to physical discomfort. During hospitalisation, his condition deteriorated and he was certified dead at 7.27am 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 sentenced to imprisonment for the offence of murder in January 2010.

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# Latest public service arrangement of EMSD

The Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD) announced today (February 23) that the services of its Registration and Permit Office in its Kowloon Bay headquarters will resume tomorrow (February 24). The Office will be open from 9am to 5.15pm from Monday to Friday.

In order to reduce social contacts and the risk of the spread of the COVID-19 virus in the community, crowd control measures will be implemented at the Office and may lead to longer waiting times. The EMSD appeals to applicants to avoid submitting their applications to the Office in person. Instead, they may submit their applications, with cheques for payment, by post (3 Kai Shing Street, Kowloon Bay) or through the drop-in box located at the ground floor lobby of the EMSD headquarters during office hours. Submitted applications will be processed as soon as practicable and applicants will be notified of the results by phone or post.

The EMSD Gallery and the EMSD Education Path will continue to be closed until further notice.

For enquiries, please contact the EMSD on 2333 3762.