

Postal services to Hubei Province subject to delay

Hongkong Post announced today (February 3) that, as advised by China Post, there will be delays for all mail delivery services (including Speedpost Service) to Hubei Province (postcodes 430000-449999).

Key statistics on service demand of A&E Departments and occupancy rates in public hospitals

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

During the winter surge, the Hospital Authority is closely monitoring the service demand of Accident and Emergency Departments and the occupancy rates in public hospitals. Key service statistics are being issued daily for public information. Details are in the appended table.

Latest arrangements on services of Public Records Office of Government Records Service

In line with the special work arrangement announced by the Government on January 31 to reduce the risk of the spread of the novel coronavirus in the community, Government Records Service (GRS) announced today (February 3) that it will maintain the following public services to members of the public by Public Records Office (PRO) who have made reservations for holdings through the online catalogue from February 4 to February 8 as follows:-

1. Loan and circulation service for reserved holdings; and
2. Self-service reproduction services

Services for those who have not made an online reservation for holdings will temporarily be unavailable.

Besides, Exhibition Hall in Hong Kong Public Records Building of GRS will be temporarily closed, and visitor and public education programmes will also be cancelled until further notice.

Starting from today, members of the public can make reservation for inspecting PRO's holdings through its online catalogue. For details, please refer to "What's New" in GRS website (www.grs.gov.hk/en/whats_new.html).

The above measures will be implemented tentatively until February 8 and will be reviewed having regard to the latest situation. Detailed arrangements will be announced in due course. Members of the public are advised to visit GRS website (www.grs.gov.hk) for the latest updates. For further enquiries, please call 2195 7700 during office hours.

Rioters block roads in Mei Foo

Last night (February 2), rioters gathered near Mei Foo Bus Terminus. They blocked roads with rubbish bins and miscellaneous objects. Some rioters spray-painted the outer wall of a bank. Some even threw wooden chairs from a footbridge, targeting a police vehicle. Such acts seriously endangered the safety of road users.

Rioters had blocked roads and damaged facilities in Mei Foo for two consecutive nights. Their violent acts posed serious threat to public safety and disturbed the daily lives of the residents. Police express strong condemnation against the violent acts of the rioters. Police will continue to take resolute enforcement action in order to bring all lawbreakers to justice.

Hospital Authority calls on healthcare staff to stay on duty

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The Hospital Authority (HA) today (February 2) called on healthcare staff to stay on duty and join hands to cope with the challenge of the service surge and the worsening situation of novel coronavirus with increasing number of cases.

Regarding the strikes advocated by some staff members, the HA said that

it shared the same goal as its staff to safeguard the health of the people of Hong Kong. It calls on staff members not to join the strike and to seek consensus through discussions. The HA also reiterated that the strike of healthcare staff would not be in the interests of patients and would directly affect public hospital services.

The HA today convened the Central Command Committee to review the services and manpower situation in various hospital clusters. According to the information available at the moment, all hospital clusters need to significantly adjust services to focus their manpower to maintain emergency and essential services, including epidemic control, and other urgent clinical services such as cancer treatment and trauma services.

The HA spokesperson said, "All hospital clusters will reduce elective surgeries and some outpatient services by about 50 per cent. Hospitals will inform patients individually for rescheduling their surgeries. In addition, all specialist outpatient clinic (SOPC) services will be affected to a certain extent. Drug refill services will be arranged for follow-up patients with stable conditions. Hospitals will focus manpower on inpatient services and patients with first SOPC appointments."

"General outpatient clinics will try to maintain all clinics open by rearranging duty rosters and hiring part-time staff. Quotas for patients with episodic illnesses will have to be reduced by 25 per cent. For follow-up appointments of patients with chronic diseases in stable condition, drug refill service will be arranged and consultation will be rescheduled."

The spokesperson said that hospitals would also curtail physiotherapy and occupational therapy outpatient services by about 50 per cent, while maintaining inpatient services with staff on duty. Outpatients will be informed of the rescheduled appointment dates.

The Major Incident Control Centres of HA Head Office and hospital clusters will be activated tomorrow to closely monitor the service situation. If the services are further affected, public announcement will be made in due course.

"The HA needs to provide 24-hour public hospital services to the community, and will redeploy manpower to maintain services. Also, the HA has established human resources rules guiding applications for leave by staff or unauthorised absence from duty."

The HA once again thanked all staff who remained on duty to cope with the additional duties being deployed to them due to the strike.