

AFCD laid charges against Mainland fisherman deckhands suspected of using snake cages for fishing and local coxswain (with photos)

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) today (October 22) laid charges against six Mainland fisherman deckhands suspected of engaging in fishing using snake cages (a type of cage trap banned in Hong Kong waters) on a local fishing vessel in waters off Hei Ling Chau and a local coxswain on board.

A joint operation was conducted by the AFCD together with the Hong Kong Police Force yesterday (October 21). A local fishing vessel was suspected of engaging in fishing using snake cages and was intercepted at around 11am on the same day for investigation. Some fishing gear (including snake cages and winches) on board was seized by the AFCD.

After the investigation, charges were laid against the seven men who were suspected to have violated the Fisheries Protection Ordinance (Cap. 171). They will appear at the Eastern Magistrates' Courts tomorrow (October 23).

Only a vessel registered under the Ordinance can be used for fishing in Hong Kong waters and only the fishing methods listed on its Certificate of Registration of Local Fishing Vessel can be employed for fishing by the vessel. The conditions of the Certificate of Registration of Local Fishing Vessel regarding cage traps stipulate that any collapsible cage traps should not be connected in any way to another; or should not exceed five metres in any of its extended dimensions. Hence, fishing using snake cages is in breach of the registration conditions. Offenders are liable to a maximum fine of \$100,000 and six months' imprisonment upon conviction.

A spokesman for the AFCD stressed, "The Government is committed to combatting illegal fishing activities in Hong Kong waters. The AFCD will continue to step up patrols and take stringent enforcement action."





Kwai Chung Hospital announces incident of losing patient data

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

â€‹The spokesperson for Kwai Chung Hospital (KCH) made the following announcement today (October 22) regarding an incident of losing patient data:

A case manager of the KCH Community Psychiatric Service lost a document containing patient's personal data yesterday (October 21), which involves the name, date of birth, gender, telephone number and address of 19 patients, and the telephone number of some relatives.

The staff concerned brought the document for contacting patients during an outreach visit yesterday afternoon. The staff had taken out the document to check patient's address. Upon completion of the visit, the staff returned to office and found the document missing. The staff immediately informed the hospital and conducted a search but in vain.

KCH is very concerned about the incident. The hospital has contacted patients concerned to express apology and explain the incident. Patient's treatment is not affected. KCH has reminded all staff again on the guidelines of safekeeping and handling patients' data and will strengthen internal training.

KCH has reported the case to the Police and the Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data, and the Hospital Authority Head Office via the Advance Incident Reporting System.

Task Group on New Medical School holds first meeting today (with photos)

The Secretary for Health, Professor Lo Chung-mau, and the Secretary for Education, Dr Choi Yuk-lin, cochaired the first meeting of the Task Group on New Medical School today (October 22) to discuss strategic directions and major parameters for the establishment of a third medical school in Hong Kong.

At the meeting, members of the Task Group discussed the considerations for establishing a third medical school in Hong Kong, and concluded that the third medical school should adopt an innovative strategic positioning in pursuit of complementary development with the two existing medical schools. The Task Group recommended that the curriculum design of the new medical school should be accorded top priority in consideration, requiring the medical curriculum to meet the requirements as stipulated by the Medical Council of Hong Kong. Proper arrangements should also be made for medical students to undergo an adequate amount of clinical training, thus ensuring that the medical students are well equipped with both professional knowledge and clinical skills to safeguard the interest of patients. The new medical school should also set out a forward-looking long-term development plan for its campus and teaching facilities, as well as an interim arrangement for a campus and a teaching hospital if admission of students is essential before the long-term facilities are available, alongside strategies to ensure financial soundness.

Professor Lo said, "The establishment of a third medical school is a significant project in the development of medical education in Hong Kong. Not only will it attract global talent and help nurture more outstanding doctors for further reinforcement of the city's healthcare system in the sustainable provision of healthcare services with enhanced quality and quantity, but also serves to promote high-quality development in medical education and research, dovetailing with the city's development as an international hub for medical training, research and innovation."

Dr Choi said, "The establishment of a new medical school will further elevate Hong Kong's position as an international education hub. Taking this unique opportunity, the scope of local medical teaching and research will be expanded through an innovative curriculum design and diversified student recruitment arrangements, complementing our goals of nurturing future talent and promoting the development of the 'Study in Hong Kong' brand."

The first target of the Task Group is to extend an invitation of proposals within this year to local universities interested in setting up the new medical school. The Task Group will liaise with respective universities and assess the proposals, addressing issues on funding arrangements, course accreditation, sources of teaching staff and students, a teaching hospital and research etc. The Task Group will subsequently submit to the Chief Executive in Council recommendations on the establishment of the new medical

school and related arrangements. Land will also be reserved in the Northern Metropolis Ngau Tam Mei for the construction of the new medical school campus and the associated integrated medical teaching and research hospital.

The Chief Executive announced in the Policy Address last Wednesday (October 16) that the Government supports the plan, by local universities, to establish a third medical school. [The Task Group on New Medical School was then established the next day \(October 17\)](#) to take up the responsibilities of devising the direction and parameters for establishing the new medical school, exploring ways to nurture more local medical talent and enhance Hong Kong's healthcare system, as well as promoting various measures for Hong Kong to become an international medical training, research and innovation hub. The Task Group comprises seasoned local, Mainland and overseas academics for medical teaching and university management, professionals, the Chairman of the Medical Council of Hong Kong, the President of the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine, as well as representatives from relevant government bureaux and departments.



[Director of Health attends WHO Western Pacific Regional Committee meeting \(with photos\)](#)

The Director of Health, Dr Ronald Lam, is leading a delegation from the Department of Health (DH) to attend the meeting of the 75th session of the World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Committee for the Western Pacific in Manila, the Philippines.

The Regional Committee meeting (RCM) is set up to formulate policies, provide oversight for regional programmes and their progress; consider and endorse new initiatives and adopt resolutions and make decisions that guide the Regional Office's work for the coming year. This year, the theme of the RCM is "Weaving Health for Families, Communities and Societies in the Western Pacific Region". In recent years, the Western Pacific region has been facing a series of public health challenges, including ageing population, increased burden on non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and communicable diseases, mental health, health security threats, climate change, digital health, and oral health. At the meeting this year, which is being held from October 21 to 25, member states and areas will exchange views, explore collaboration and pass resolutions on the above issues. Five visions of weaving health, namely transformative primary care for universal health coverage, climate-resilient health systems, resilient communities, societies and health systems for health security, healthier people throughout the life course, and technology and innovation for future health equity, have been endorsed by the RCM to address the above challenges.

Speaking at the agenda item of the Address by and Report of the Regional Director, Dr Lam said, "Hong Kong, China noted the Report of the Regional Director, and will fully support the newly defined five visions of weaving health. While we are enjoying one of the best health indices in terms of life expectancies, maternal and infant mortality rates and so forth, we are facing similar challenges as other member states and areas such as ageing population, rise of NCDs, and health security threats. As announced in "The Chief Executive's 2024 Policy Address", Hong Kong, China is now embarking on substantial health reforms via two major themes of "Deepen Reform of the Healthcare System" and "International Health and Medical Innovation Hub". The five visions of the WHO Western Pacific Region is in alignment with our health initiatives of the "The Chief Executive's 2024 Policy Address". Hong Kong, China will continue to work closely with the WHO in achieving health for all in the Region."

The DH has been actively contributing to global public health by supporting the WHO in tackling various public health challenges. The DH is designated as the WHO Collaborating Centre for Traditional Medicine and the WHO Collaborating Centre for Smoking Cessation and Treatment of Tobacco Dependence. Furthermore, the WHO has designated the Public Health Laboratory Services Branch of the Centre for Health Protection of the DH as a reference laboratory for various communicable diseases, including tuberculosis, measles/rubella, influenza A (H5), SARS and COVID-19, making significant contributions to fighting epidemics worldwide. The DH will keep on maintaining close contact with member states and areas of the WHO on various issues to safeguard the health of the people.



FEHD strives to crack down on sale of chilled or frozen meat disguised as fresh meat (with photo)

The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) has long been committed to combating the sale of chilled or frozen meat disguised as fresh meat, and today (October 22) raided a licensed fresh provision shop (FPS) in Mong Kok District suspected of selling frozen meat as fresh meat.

During the operation, FEHD officers raided a licensed FPS on Argyle Street in Mong Kok, and marked and sealed about 33 kilograms of suspected frozen beef and about 150kg of pre-packaged frozen beef for further investigation. In addition, about 45kg of frozen beef stored at an improper temperature were immediately destroyed. Samples of beef were also collected for detection of preservatives. Prosecutions will be initiated should there be sufficient evidence. The licensee of the FPS is suspected of breaching the licensing condition for the display and sale of frozen meat as fresh meat, and the FEHD is proceeding with the cancellation of the FPS's licence.

FEHD officers also gave verbal warnings to the licensee due to non-compliance with the relevant licensing condition by failing to provide delivery notes for inspection and storing frozen beef at an improper

temperature.

A spokesman for the FEHD said, "The selling of chilled or frozen meat disguised as fresh meat breaches the licensing conditions and causes food safety problems. The operation of these profiteers is unfair to other shops that comply with the requirements."

The spokesman added, "Anyone selling chilled or frozen meat without permission commits an offence and is liable to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and six months' imprisonment on conviction. The department will continue to conduct regular inspections at licensed FPSs and market meat stalls, and will actively handle the complaints received. In detecting any irregularities, the FEHD will carry out immediate investigations and take appropriate enforcement action. In addition, the FEHD also proactively investigates suspected violations from time to time, and conducts surprise inspections and enforcement actions as necessary. If there is sufficient evidence, prosecutions will be initiated and follow-up action will be taken against the breach of licensing conditions or tenancy agreements. The licences of those FPSs breaching licensing conditions may be cancelled, while the tenancies of market meat stalls breaching tenancy agreements may be terminated."

â€‹The spokesman stressed that the FEHD is very concerned and has been committed to combating the sale of chilled or frozen meat disguised as fresh meat by taking stringent enforcement actions against the violations.

