

Meetings of Legislative Council and its Committees

The following is issued on behalf of the Legislative Council Secretariat:

The Legislative Council (LegCo) and its Committees will hold 15 open meetings during the week from October 29 to November 2 in the LegCo Complex. Details of the meetings are available in the meeting schedule attached.

The information in the meeting schedule is subject to change. Please refer to the "LegCo Calendar" on the LegCo Website (www.legco.gov.hk) for the latest details of meetings.

Members of the public are welcome to observe open meetings of LegCo and its Committees. Interested individuals and groups are advised to make advance booking of seats by calling the LegCo Secretariat at 3919 3399 during office hours. Members of the public can also listen to or watch all open meetings via the "Webcast" system on the LegCo Website.

Update on number of dengue fever cases

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (October 26) reported the latest number of cases of dengue fever (DF), and again urged the public to maintain strict environmental hygiene, mosquito control and personal protective measures both locally and during travel.

From October 19 to 25, the CHP recorded five imported DF cases. The patients had been to Guangdong, Mainland China (three cases, including one case epidemiologically linked to a case from last week), India (one case) and Thailand (one case) during the incubation period.

A spokesman for the DH advised members of the public that the health authority of Guangdong announced earlier on that Guangdong has entered the peak season of DF and the number of local cases recorded was higher than the average in the same period from 2015 to 2017. Members of the public are reminded to adopt personal protective measures against mosquitoes to prevent mosquito-borne diseases such as DF when visiting Guangdong.

As of yesterday (October 25), 132 cases had been confirmed this year, of which 29 were local cases and 103 were imported cases. The imported cases were mainly from Thailand (32), Mainland China (22) and the Philippines (16).

DF remains endemic in some areas of Asia and beyond. The latest figures

for 2018 revealed that 67 968 cases had been recorded in Thailand, 2 319 in Singapore (since December 31, 2017) and 150 in Japan. In Taiwan, 157 local cases have been recorded to date in 2018. In the Americas, the latest figures indicated that 203 157 and 48 926 cases have been filed in Brazil and Mexico respectively in 2018.

The public should take heed of the following advice on mosquito control:

- Thoroughly check all gully traps, roof gutters, surface channels and drains to prevent blockage;
- Scrub and clean drains and surface channels with an alkaline detergent compound at least once a week to remove any deposited mosquito eggs;
- Properly dispose of refuse, such as soft drink cans, empty bottles and boxes, in covered litter containers;
- Completely change the water of flowers and plants at least once a week. The use of saucers should be avoided if possible;
- Level irregular ground surfaces before the rainy season;
- Avoid staying in shrubby areas; and
- Take personal protective measures such as wearing light-coloured long-sleeved clothes and trousers and apply insect repellent containing DEET to clothing or uncovered areas of the body when doing outdoor activities.

To reduce the risk of infections spread by mosquitoes, apart from general measures, travellers returning from affected areas should apply insect repellent for 14 days (DF) or at least 21 days (Zika virus infection) upon arrival in Hong Kong. If feeling unwell, seek medical advice promptly and provide travel details to the doctor. DEET-containing insect repellents are effective and the public should take heed of the tips below:

- Read the label instructions carefully first;
- Apply right before entering an area with risk of mosquito bites;
- Apply on exposed skin and clothing;
- Use DEET of up to 30 per cent for pregnant women and up to 10 per cent for children*;
- Apply sunscreen first, then insect repellent; and
- Re-apply only when needed and follow the instructions.

* For children who travel to countries or areas where mosquito-borne diseases are endemic or epidemic and where exposure is likely, those aged 2 months or above can use DEET-containing insect repellents with a DEET concentration of up to 30 per cent.

The public may refer to the CHP's tips for using insect repellents for details.

SED to visit Zhejiang

The Secretary for Education (SED), Mr Kevin Yeung, will leave for Zhejiang Province this Sunday (October 28) to participate in the Ningbo-Hong Kong Education Co-operation Forum 2018.

Mr Yeung will meet with officials of Zhejiang Province, Hangzhou and Ningbo to exchange views on education interflow and collaborations.

He will call at the China Academy of Art, the University of Nottingham Ningbo China and other education organisations, including local and international schools. He will also visit the Xixi Park of Alibaba Group.

Mr Yeung will return to Hong Kong via Shenzhen on October 30. During his absence, the Under Secretary for Education, Dr Choi Yuk-lin, will be the Acting SED.

"HA Risk Alert" latest issue published

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The 51st issue of "HA Risk Alert" was published today (October 26) by the Hospital Authority (HA). The publication is a risk management and communication initiative to further strengthen the reporting and monitoring of medical incidents in public hospitals.

In the second quarter of 2018 (April – June) four Sentinel Events were reported, comprising a case of retained instrument after surgery/interventional procedure, two cases of inpatient suicide and a case of wrong side procedure. Among the 10 reported Serious Untoward Events, nine were related to medication error and one patient misidentification.

"Subsequent to incident review and analysis of root causes of these incidents, important lessons of patient safety are identified, while recommendations are made and shared in this publication to avoid similar events in future," the HA spokesperson said.

The publication has been distributed to all health care professionals in public hospitals for continuous quality improvement purposes. It can also be accessed by the public at www.ha.org.hk/riskalert. "HA Risk Alert" is published on a quarterly basis and posted on the HA website every last working Friday in the months of January, April, July and October. The next issue is scheduled to be published earlier, on January 24, 2019 (Thursday) to dovetail with the publication of the Annual Report on Sentinel and Serious Untoward Events.

CHP investigates outbreak of acute gastroenteritis at kindergarten-cum-child care centre in Tuen Mun

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (October 26) investigating an outbreak of acute gastroenteritis (AGE) at a kindergarten-cum-child care centre in Tuen Mun, and hence reminded the public and management of institutions to maintain personal and environmental hygiene against AGE.

The outbreak involves seven boys and 13 girls aged 2 to 5, as well as one female staff member, who developed fever, diarrhoea and vomiting since October 24. Eighteen sought medical attention and two of them required hospitalisation for further management. All patients have been in a stable condition.

Upon laboratory testing, the stool specimen of one affected child tested positive for norovirus and sapovirus.

Officers of the CHP conducted a site visit and provided health advice to the staff of the school concerning proper and thorough disinfection, proper disposal of vomitus, and personal and environmental hygiene. The school has been put under medical surveillance.

The CHP's investigations are ongoing.

A spokesman for the CHP advised members of the public to take heed of the following preventive measures against gastroenteritis:

- Ensure proper personal hygiene;
- Wash hands thoroughly before handling food and eating, after using the toilet or after changing diapers;
- Wear gloves when disposing of vomitus or faecal matter, and wash hands afterwards;
- Clean and disinfect contaminated areas or items promptly and thoroughly with diluted household bleach (by adding one part of bleach containing 5.25 per cent sodium hypochlorite to 49 parts of water). Wash hands thoroughly afterwards;
- Maintain good indoor ventilation;
- Pay attention to food hygiene;
- Use separate utensils to handle raw and cooked food;
- Avoid food that is not thoroughly cooked;
- Drink boiled water; and
- Do not patronise unlicensed food premises or food stalls.

The public may visit the CHP's website (www.chp.gov.hk) or call the Health Education Hotline (2833 0111) for more information.