

# Tuberculosis rate in Hong Kong educational institutions shows decreasing trend in second half of 2024

â€‹The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) announced today (February 28) the situation of tuberculosis (TB) notifications in educational institutions in the second half of 2024, and reminded members of the public and school management to maintain personal and environmental hygiene at all times to prevent TB infections.

â€‹The DH received 1 620 notifications (provisional figure) of TB cases from July to December 2024, among which 44 cases involved patients aged 3 to 24 (i.e. normal school age), accounting for 2.72 per cent of the total notified cases in the same period. The corresponding proportion of TB cases for this age group showed a decreasing trend compared with the second half of 2022 (4.12 per cent) and that of 2023 (2.95 per cent). The DH will continue to monitor the situation. There were three cases studying at the same tertiary institution in second half of 2024. The information on TB cases in Hong Kong educational institutions has been uploaded to the [Tuberculosis and Chest Service \(TB&CS\) statistics webpage](#). The CHP has provided [guidelines](#) on the prevention and management of TB for the school's reference.

â€‹"According to the Prevention and Control of Disease Ordinance (Cap. 599), TB is one of the statutorily notifiable infectious diseases. Early identification of TB cases and prompt initiation of anti-TB treatment remain the mainstay of control. With the publicity and education efforts of the DH and the increased public awareness of hygiene, the TB notification rate in Hong Kong has shown a steady and significant decrease over the past decades. However, TB remains a relatively common disease in Hong Kong. About 43 TB cases (provisional figure) per 100 000 members of the population were newly diagnosed in 2024, while about 2.2 persons (provisional figure) died of TB. The DH is committed to promoting awareness of TB and its prevention in schools, the community and the healthcare sector to facilitate early identification and diagnosis and curb the transmission link at its source," the Consultant of Public Health Services Branch of the DH, Dr Tai Lai-bun, said.

â€‹TB is an airborne disease. When a TB patient coughs or sneezes, small droplets containing the tubercle bacilli are generated and spread in the air. If another person breathes in these small airborne droplets, he or she may be infected with the germ. However, in general, only prolonged contact with a patient increases the risk of infection.

â€‹"Upon notification, the CHP will conduct contact investigation for the close contacts of each case and take appropriate follow-up actions," Dr Tai said.

â€‹She added that people with symptoms of TB, such as persistent cough, blood in sputum, weight loss, fever and night sweating, should seek prompt medical advice. Patients with TB should strengthen respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette and receive TB treatment under supervision.

â€‹Members of the public may also visit the [TB&CS website](#) for more information about TB&CS, TB-related information and figures.

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## **Hong Kong Customs special operation combats sale of counterfeit medicines (with photos)**

Hong Kong Customs conducted a special operation in Tai Po, Causeway Bay and Jordan between February 13 and 27 to combat the sale of counterfeit medicines and seized about 14 000 items of suspected counterfeit medicines with an estimated market value of about \$850,000.

Customs earlier received information alleging that suspected counterfeit medicines were put on sale in the markets. After an in-depth investigation and with the assistance of the trademark owners, Customs officers took enforcement action and raided three medicine shops in Tai Po, Causeway Bay and Jordan, seizing the batch of suspected counterfeit medicines. With the assistance of officers from the Department of Health, Customs also seized a quantity of suspected controlled medicines at the medicine shop in Jordan which does not have the trader licence.

During the operation, Customs arrested four men, aged between 31 and 48, including one shop proprietor and three salespersons.

All arrested persons have been released on bail pending further investigation. An investigation is ongoing, and the likelihood of further arrests is not ruled out. Samples of the suspected counterfeit goods involved in the case will be sent to the Government Laboratory for safety testing.

Customs will continue to step up inspection and enforcement to vigorously combat the sale of different kinds of counterfeit goods.

Customs reminds consumers to procure goods at reputable shops and to check with the trademark owners or their authorised agents if the authenticity of a product is in doubt. Also, traders should be cautious and prudent in merchandising since the sale of counterfeit goods is a serious crime and offenders are liable to criminal sanctions.

Under the Trade Descriptions Ordinance, any person who sells or

possesses for sale any goods with a forged trademark commits an offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$500,000 and imprisonment for five years.

Members of the public may report any suspected counterfeiting activities to Customs' 24-hour hotline 182 8080 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account ([crimereport@customs.gov.hk](mailto:crimereport@customs.gov.hk)) or online form ([eform.cefs.gov.hk/form/ced002/en](http://eform.cefs.gov.hk/form/ced002/en)).



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## [Film Development Fund launches Film Production Grant Scheme for Promoting Chinese Culture](#)

The following is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Film Development Council (FDC):

"The Chief Executive's 2024 Policy Address" announced the provision of financial support for the film industry under the Film Development Fund (FDF) to produce films that promote Chinese culture, showcasing fine traditional Chinese culture elements to audiences. The Government will launch the Film Production Grant Scheme for Promoting Chinese Culture (GSPCC), with a view to encouraging creators to incorporate Chinese cultural elements into film productions, thereby promoting the charm and diversity of Chinese culture. The GSPCC is open for application from today (February 28) to September 1, 2025, for a period of six months.

The GSPCC accepts applications for feature-length narrative and animation films. It is anticipated that a maximum of two projects will be subsidised. Each approved film project will receive a grant of up to \$10 million. The producers and directors of the applications for the GSPCC shall possess substantial experience in the film industry, while the directors shall be permanent residents of Hong Kong.

The Government will form an independent assessment panel to assess applications based on five criteria: script quality, promotion of Chinese cultural elements, production budget, market potential and execution capability of the production team. Details of the GSPCC and relevant application forms are available on the FDC's website ([www.fdc.gov.hk/en/gspcc](http://www.fdc.gov.hk/en/gspcc)).

The Chairman of the FDC, Dr Wilfred Wong, said, "Chinese culture has a long and rich history with profound connotations. We hope that this new scheme will encourage more Hong Kong directors to unleash their creativity to produce films on Chinese culture, strengthening the promotion of excellent traditional Chinese culture through the power of films."

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## Appointments to Culture Commission

The Government announced today (February 28) the appointment of members to the Culture Commission (CuC), with effect from March 1, 2025, for a term of two years.

The Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism, Miss Rosanna Law, welcomed the appointments. She said, "The newly appointed and reappointed members have rich experience in arts, culture and community services. I trust that they will provide valuable advice to the Government in fostering the development of Hong Kong's arts, culture and creative industries."

Miss Law also thanked the three outgoing members, Mr Edward Cheng Wai-sun, Professor Tseng Sun-man and Mrs Dominica Yang, for their contributions to the CuC.

The membership of the new-term CuC is as follows:

Chairman

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Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism

Non-official members

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Dr Wilfred Wong Ying-wai (Vice-chairman)

Dr Adrian Cheng Chi-kong

Mr Vincent Cheng Wing-shun

Ms Lovinia Chiu Siu-yin \*

Mr Vincent Chow Wing-shing

Mr Kenneth Fok Kai-kong

Mr Andy Hei Kao-chiang

Ms Leonie Ki Man-fung

Dr Lam Ho-yi

Mr Peter Lau Man-pong \*  
Mrs Margaret Leung Ko May-yee  
Dr Victor Lo Chung-wing  
Ms Lo Kwong-ping \*  
Professor Lui Yu-hon  
Professor Fredric Mao Chun-fai  
Mr Daryl Ng Win-kong  
Mr Henry Tang Ying-yen  
Mr Eric Tsang Chi-wai  
Mrs Bonnie Woo Chan Tak-chi  
Mr Charles Yang Chuen-liang \*  
Mr Yang Yong  
Mr Alexander Yeung Ching-loong  
Dr Frankie Yeung Wai-shing  
Mr Yu Chiu-for \*  
Dr Allan Zeman

#### Official members

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Secretary for Development or his/her representative  
Secretary for Education or his/her representative  
Secretary for Home and Youth Affairs or his/her representative

\* new members

The CuC, chaired by the Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism, advises on matters such as strategy to encourage the private sector's participation in promoting the development of arts, culture and creative industries, and promote arts and cultural exchanges between Hong Kong and the Mainland as well as the rest of the world, with a view to realising the vision of turning Hong Kong into an East-meets-West centre for international cultural exchange.

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## Grading of beach water quality released

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) today (February 28) released the latest grading of water quality for six gazetted beaches that are open all year round for swimming.

Five beaches were rated as Good (Grade 1), and one as Fair (Grade 2).

Grade 1 beaches are:

Casam Beach

Golden Beach

Clear Water Bay Second Beach      Lido Beach  
Deep Water Bay Beach

Grade 2 beach is:

Silverstrand Beach

Compared with the grading released last week, Silverstrand Beach has been changed from Grade 1 to Grade 2.

"The changes are generally within the normal range of fluctuation of the bacteriological water quality of the beaches," an EPD spokesman said.

Under the present grading system, beaches are classified into four grades, namely Good (Grade 1), Fair (Grade 2), Poor (Grade 3) and Very Poor (Grade 4), according to the level of E. coli in the water. Grades are calculated on the basis of the geometric mean of the E. coli counts on the five most recent sampling occasions.

While the ratings represent the general water quality at the beaches, the EPD spokesman reminded members of the public that water quality could be temporarily affected during and after periods of heavy rain. Bathers should avoid swimming at beaches for up to three days after a tropical cyclone or heavy rainfall.

A summary of beach grades is published weekly before the weekend. The latest beach grades based on the most current data may be obtained from the EPD's website on Beach Water Quality ([www.epd.gov.hk/epd/beach](http://www.epd.gov.hk/epd/beach)) or the beach hotline, 2511 6666. Members of the public can also obtain the latest daily water quality forecast information for all beaches that are open for swimming through the EPD's dedicated webpage on the beach water quality forecast ([www.epd.gov.hk/en/BWQForecast](http://www.epd.gov.hk/en/BWQForecast)).