

Two persons sentenced for breaching compulsory quarantine order

Two persons were sentenced by the magistrates' courts today (April 28) for violating the Compulsory Quarantine of Certain Persons Arriving at Hong Kong Regulation (Cap. 599C) (the Regulation).

The first case involved a man aged 48, who was earlier issued a compulsory quarantine order stating that he must conduct quarantine at home for 14 days. Before the expiry of the quarantine order, he left the place of quarantine on July 26, 2020, without reasonable excuse nor permission given by an authorised officer and was stopped by an immigration officer at the Shenzhen Bay Control Point. He was charged with two counts of contravening sections 8(1), 8(4) and 8(5) of the Regulation and was fined \$1,500 for each of the two charges by the Fanling Magistrates' Courts today.

The second case involved a woman aged 52, who was earlier issued a compulsory quarantine order stating that she must conduct quarantine at home for 14 days. Before the expiry of the quarantine order, she left the place of quarantine twice on October 7 and 9, 2020, without reasonable excuse nor permission given by an authorised officer. She was charged with two counts of contravening sections 8(1) and 8(5) of the Regulation and was sentenced by the Tuen Mun Magistrates' Courts today to immediate imprisonment for a total 21 days for the two charges, and was fined \$1,000 for each of the two charges.

Breaching a quarantine order is a criminal offence and offenders are subject to a maximum fine of \$25,000 and imprisonment for six months. A spokesman for the Department of Health said the sentences send a clear message to the community that breaching a compulsory quarantine order is a criminal offence that the Government will not tolerate, and solemnly reminded the public to comply with the regulations. As of today, a total of 130 persons have been convicted by the courts for breaching compulsory quarantine orders and have received sentences including immediate imprisonment for up to 14 weeks or a fine of up to \$15,000. The spokesman reiterated that resolute actions will be taken against anyone who has breached the relevant regulations.

LCQ4: Protection of online personal data privacy

Following is a question by the Hon Martin Liao and a written reply by the Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs, Mr Erick Tsang Kwok-

wai, in the Legislative Council today (April 28):

Question:

It has been reported that the personal data of some 500 million users worldwide of LinkedIn, an employment-oriented community networking platform, have recently been scraped and sold, and the social media platform Facebook was hacked last year, resulting in the personal data of its over 500 million users worldwide (of which nearly 3 million were Hong Kong people) being stolen and made public. The Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data, Hong Kong (PCPD) indicated earlier on that it had written to the operator of the former to seek clarifications, and to the operator of the latter to initiate a compliance check on the relevant incident. On the other hand, in recent years quite a number of people have engaged in online doxxing, i.e. making public on the internet (especially on social media) the personal data so obtained. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) whether it knows (i) the progress made by the PCPD on its follow-up work/compliance check on the aforesaid two incidents, and (ii) the remedial measures taken by the operators concerned;

(2) whether it knows if the PCPD has assessed the effectiveness of the Guidance on Protecting Personal Data Privacy in the Use of Social Media and Instant Messaging Apps which the PCPD issued early this month, and what relevant public education and publicity activities that the PCPD has scheduled for the coming year (e.g. holding seminars);

(3) given that the PCPD refers personal data security incidents involving criminal elements (e.g. "access to computer with criminal or dishonest intent") to the Police for investigation, whether it knows if the PCPD will refer the aforesaid two incidents to the Police for investigation; as the two incidents reportedly involved acts of stealing data by hackers outside Hong Kong, how the PCPD and the Police deal with acts of infringements of Hong Kong residents' privacy by people outside Hong Kong; and

(4) given that the Government is currently working jointly with the PCPD on amending the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance (Cap. 486), including criminalising the acts of doxxing and empowering the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data to undertake investigation and prosecution work in respect of doxxing incidents, of the related preliminary proposals?

Reply:

President,

In response to the question raised by the Hon Martin Liao, having consulted the Security Bureau and the Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data, Hong Kong (PCPD), the response is as follows:

(1) Upon the suspected personal data leakage incidents affecting the social

media platform users of Facebook and LinkedIn, the PCPD immediately took an active lead in following up on the incidents, including initiating a compliance check against Facebook. The PCPD also sent letters to remind the concerned social media platforms that if it was found that Hong Kong users were affected, they should notify the affected users as soon as possible to mitigate the possible risks arising from the incidents. According to the preliminary replies to the PCPD from the concerned social media platforms, Facebook responded that while investigations were ongoing, it was believed that the users' data was maliciously scraped from publicly accessible information on Facebook platforms before September 2019. To this end, Facebook provided an online contact form in its Help Centre for users to submit enquiries relating to the incident, including whether users' data had been improperly disclosed. LinkedIn responded to the PCPD that it was investigating the incident, and the disclosed personal data included publicly accessible information of members on the LinkedIn website, as well as information aggregated from other websites. The PCPD will continue to follow up on the above incidents.

(2) In April 2021, the PCPD issued the "Guidance on Protecting Personal Data Privacy in the Use of Social Media and Instant Messaging Apps" (Guidance), providing practical suggestions for the public to mitigate the privacy risks in the use of social media (www.pcpd.org.hk/english/resources_centre/publications/files/social_media_guidance.pdf). Such suggestions included matters the public should look out for when registering a new social media account, as well as how to manage privacy settings to limit the extent of disclosure of publicly accessible personal data. Upon issue, the Guidance has been widely reported by the media. Many media reports quoted the "Step-by-Step Guide on Adjusting Privacy Settings" in the Guidance, which advised the public on the means to strengthen the protection of privacy while using social media. In various media interviews, the PCPD also explained to the public the privacy risks associated with the use of social media and instant messaging software, and how to step up the protection of personal data privacy. Since its uploading to the PCPD website, the Guidance has gained over 2 200 views, and the PCPD has achieved 10 000 reaches when promoting the Guidance through various social media platforms. Besides, the PCPD has distributed the Guidance to the Home Affairs Enquiry Centres in all 18 districts for collection by members of the public. The Guidance has also been issued to various trade associations, professional bodies, public organisations and members of the PCPD Data Protection Officers' Club for their reference. The PCPD has all along been undertaking various promotion, education and publicity activities to remind the public of the privacy risks involved in the use of social media and the mitigation measures. For example, in April 2021, the PCPD held an online seminar entitled "Protection of Personal Data Privacy in the Use of Information and Communications Technology". In the coming year, the PCPD will continue to organise related seminars and promotional activities, including an upcoming free public online seminar entitled "Social Media and You" in May, together with the production of promotional leaflets and videos to raise the public's vigilance in the protection of personal data privacy.

(3) Theft of personal data may not only contravene the Personal Data

(Privacy) Ordinance (PDPO), but may also, depending on circumstances, breach other criminal offences, for example theft and obtaining property by deception offences under the Theft Ordinance (Cap. 210), access to computer with dishonest intent offence under the Crimes Ordinance (Cap. 200) etc. The PCPD is continuing to follow up on the above two suspected data leakage incidents. If there is evidence suggesting possible contravention of criminal offences, the case will be referred to the Police for follow up. As for cases involving outside-Hong-Kong elements, the Police will handle in accordance with powers granted under relevant existing laws in Hong Kong, for example the Criminal Jurisdiction Ordinance (Cap. 461).

(4) The Government attaches great importance to combating doxxing acts, which are intrusive to personal data privacy. To further combat doxxing acts, the Government and the PCPD are working on the amendments to the PDPO. The directions of amendments mainly encompass: (1) criminalising doxxing acts as an offence under the PDPO, (2) conferring on the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data (Commissioner) statutory powers to demand the removal of doxxing contents from social media platforms or websites, and (3) empowering the Commissioner to carry out criminal investigations and initiate prosecution. We aim to complete the drafting of the legislative amendments related to doxxing and submit the same to the Legislative Council for scrutiny within this legislative year.

LCQ10: Mental health services

Following is a question by Dr the Hon Chiang Lai-wan and a written reply by the Secretary for Food and Health, Professor Sophia Chan, in the Legislative Council today (April 28):

Question:

It has been reported that a survey conducted early this year interviewed 2 700-odd members of the public. The survey findings show that, after experiencing the coronavirus disease 2019 epidemic and complying with the various social distancing measures for more than one year, about 20 per cent to 30 per cent of the respondents suffered from moderate to severe emotional disturbances, and about 40 per cent of them felt isolated. On the other hand, some parents have indicated that during class suspension for schools implemented on a number of occasions last year, they had to spend more energy on taking care of their children and assisting them in learning at home, which made them feel very stressful. At the end of last year, a parent committed suicide and died allegedly due to problems in teaching her child to do homework. Regarding mental health services, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) whether it has conducted any survey on how the mental health of members

of the public has been affected by the epidemic; if so, of the findings;

(2) of the number of attempted or fatal suicide cases reported last year which were suspected to be related to the emotional disturbances caused by the epidemic, as well as the details of such cases, including the number, age and gender of the persons concerned, and whether they were unemployed (if so, how long they had been unemployed);

(3) whether it knows the following information about the mental health services (including in-patient services) under the Hospital Authority (HA) in each of the past five years:

(i) the total number of patients and, among them, the number of those who were patients with severe mental illness,

(ii) the attendance at the psychiatric specialist outpatient clinics, and

(iii) the respective numbers of psychiatric doctors, psychiatric nurses, clinical psychologists and occupational therapists;

(4) whether it has assessed if the demand for the mental health services under the HA will increase in the coming year due to the epidemic; if it has assessed and the outcome is in the affirmative, whether the Government will allocate additional resources to the HA for recruiting more healthcare personnel;

(5) whether it knows the latest progress of the HA's current application of information technology in the HA's mental health services for providing tele-consultation services;

(6) whether it will allocate additional resources to social welfare organisations for enhancing mental health tele-support services;

(7) whether it will establish an online emotional support platform for the provision of emotional support services by professional counsellors to members of the public suffering from emotional disturbances; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that; and

(8) whether, in the coming year, the Government will enhance mental health support measures for different target groups (e.g. students, parents and healthcare personnel); if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

My reply to the question raised by Dr the Hon Chiang Lai-wan is as follows:

(1) and (2) The Government has not commissioned any institutions to undertake mental health surveys in connection with the COVID-19 epidemic, nor has it conducted any researches on whether attempted suicide or suicide cases are related to the epidemic.

(3) (i) The table below sets out the total number of psychiatric patients treated and the number of patients diagnosed with schizophrenic spectrum disorder in the Hospital Authority (HA) from 2016-17 to 2020-21 (projection as at December 31, 2020).

Year	Total number of psychiatric patients treated (Note 1) (including inpatients and patients at specialist outpatient clinics (SOPCs) and day hospitals)	Number of patients diagnosed with schizophrenic spectrum disorder (Note 1 and 2)
2016-17	240 900	49 100
2017-18	251 300	49 800
2018-19	261 800	50 400
2019-20	270 700	50 500
2020-21 (projection as at December 31, 2020)	271 700	50 400

Notes 1: Figures are rounded to the nearest hundred.

Notes 2: In the HA, patients with severe mental illness generally refer to those suffering from schizophrenic spectrum disorder and do not include severely mentally ill patients diagnosed with other disorders.

(ii) The table below sets out the total number of attendances of psychiatric SOPCs in the HA from 2016-17 to 2020-21.

€	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21 (provisional figures)
Total number of attendances of psychiatric SOPCs	859 338	873 141	897 777	901 284	916 802

(iii) The table below sets out the numbers of psychiatric doctors, psychiatric nurses, clinical psychologists and occupational therapists working in the psychiatric stream of the HA from 2016-17 to 2020-21 (as at December 31, 2020).

Year	Psychiatric Doctors (Note 3 and 4)	Psychiatric Nurses (Note 3 and 5) (including Community Psychiatric Nurses)	Clinical Psychologists (Note 3)	Occupational Therapists (Note 3)
2016-17	349	2 493	90	257
2017-18	347	2 588	86	263
2018-19	351	2 670	90	263
2019-20	370	2 814	93	278
2020-21 (as at December 31, 2020)	390	2 905	105	301

Note 3: Figures are calculated on a full-time equivalent basis, including permanent, contract and temporary staff, and excluding staff in the HA Head Office.

Note 4: Psychiatric doctors refer to doctors working for the specialty of psychiatry except interns.

Note 5: Psychiatric nurses include nurses working in psychiatric hospitals (i.e. Kwai Chung Hospital, Castle Peak Hospital and Siu Lam Hospital), nurses working in psychiatric departments of other non-psychiatric hospitals, and all other nurses working in the psychiatric stream.

(4) The HA has earmarked additional funding of around \$156 million (including additional recurrent funding of around \$147 million) in 2021-22 for addressing the escalating demand for psychiatric services across different age groups in both hospitals and community settings. Relevant measures include:

1. enhancing psychiatric services for children and adolescents (C&A) by developing specialised C&A psychiatric services in both Hong Kong East and Kowloon Central Clusters in phases, and strengthening the collaboration between paediatricians and psychiatrists in Kowloon West Cluster;
2. increasing manpower to tie in with the expansion of the Student Mental Health Support Scheme to more schools in the 2021/22 school year by the Food and Health Bureau;
3. enhancing community psychiatric services by recruiting additional case managers;
4. enhancing psychogeriatric outreach services;
5. supporting the upcoming service commencement of the new Kwai Chung Hospital; and
6. enhancing psychiatric in-patient services.

The HA will keep in view the situation, continue to review and monitor its services to meet patients' needs, and allocate additional resources in a timely manner to cope with new service demands that may arise.

(5) During the COVID-19 epidemic, the HA has maintained normal consultation

services in psychiatric SOPCs for patients to attend scheduled follow-up medical appointments. Patients who have rescheduled their appointments due to the epidemic will be given drug refills as appropriate to ensure that they have the necessary medication. If necessary, hospitals will provide services through other channels for suitable patients, e.g. following up their conditions by phone.

Meanwhile, the HA's psychiatric units are piloting a mobile application for provision of telehealth services. For example, tele-consultations will be arranged when providing elderly psychiatric outreach service for suitable patients living in residential care homes for the elderly.

(6) and (8) The Chief Executive announced in the 2020 Policy Address that in view of the social unrest in 2019 and the persisting COVID-19 epidemic since early 2020, which had brought different levels of impact and influence on the mental well-being of people, the Government decided to provide additional resources of \$300 million under the Beat Drugs Fund to better support the needy in the community and raise public awareness of mental health. The Advisory Committee on Mental Health (ACMH) is responsible for co-ordinating the initiative, and will work with service providers and non-governmental organisations in the sector to identify needs and set priorities, with a view to facilitating or promoting projects as appropriate.

A draft framework for the funding scheme was endorsed by the ACMH at its meeting in February 2021, details of which are being firmed up. Proposals will be invited in due course.

Separately, primary and secondary school students enrolled in the Student Health Service (StdHS) will be given an annual appointment to attend the Department of Health's Student Health Service Centre for health check-ups, which include the use of the Health Assessment Questionnaire to help screen for psychological and behavioural problems, interviews, counselling, health promotion activities and follow-up work. Students screened to have physical and/or psychological problems will be referred to Special Assessment Centres, specialist clinics, school social workers, the Social Welfare Department (SWD) or other appropriate service providers for follow-up. In the coming year, the StdHS will further strengthen liaison and communication with various stakeholders, whereas doctors and nurses will keep contact with students referred to psychiatry to follow up on their progress and provide appropriate support.

(7) The SWD and the HA provide mental health hotline services to offer emotional support to members of the public. Various non-governmental organisations also provide online platforms for emotional support, such as "Open UP", "Counseline@MHAHK", "eSmiley Cyber Youth Support Team" and "Caritas Infinity Teens – Cyber Youth Support Team". Target audience of the service cover the youth, parents, as well as people in need of emotional support and suicide prevention. The relevant information and hyperlinks are available on the one-stop thematic website of "Shall We Talk", the mental health promotion and public education initiative launched by the ACMH.

Fraudulent website related to Hang Seng Bank, Limited

The following is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority:

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) wishes to alert members of the public to a press release issued by Hang Seng Bank, Limited relating to a fraudulent website, which has been reported to the HKMA. A hyperlink to the press release is available on the [HKMA website](#).

Anyone who has provided his or her personal information, or who has conducted any financial transactions, through or in response to the website concerned, should contact the bank using the contact information provided in the press release, and report the matter to the Police by contacting the Cyber Security and Technology Crime Bureau of the Hong Kong Police Force at 2860 5012.

HKMA Annual Report 2020

The following is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority:

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) today (April 28) published its annual report for 2020 including the financial statements of the Exchange Fund. The report reviews trends and major events in monetary and banking affairs, and reports on the HKMA's work during 2020. It also sets out the HKMA's work plans for 2021.

The HKMA Annual Report 2020 can be viewed on and downloaded from the [HKMA website](#) free of charge.