

Cluster of Multi-drug Resistant Acinetobacter cases in North District Hospital

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The spokesperson for the North District Hospital (NDH) made the following announcement today (April 14):

Since April 4, five male patients (aged 75 to 89) of a medical ward have been confirmed as carriers of Multi-drug Resistant Acinetobacter. Among them, a 76-year-old patient and an 89-year-old patient had passed away earlier due to their underlying diseases. Two other patients are currently hospitalised under isolation in NDH with stable condition, and the remaining patient had been discharged earlier.

Following the activation of the Emergency Response Level in public hospitals, the visiting arrangement for the ward has been suspended. The following enhanced infection control measures have been stepped up according to the established guidelines:

1. Enhanced cleaning and disinfection of the ward concerned;
2. Application of stringent contact precautions and enhanced hand hygiene for staff and patients; and
3. Enhanced patient and environmental screening procedures.

The cases have been reported to the Hospital Authority Head Office and the Centre for Health Protection for necessary follow-up. The hospital will continue to closely monitor the conditions of other patients in the ward.

Education Bureau organises online exhibition to promote Applied Learning courses (with photos)

The Education Bureau (EDB) today (April 14) informed all secondary schools and encouraged students, parents and teachers to visit the "Applied Learning Courses Virtual Exhibition 2021" (edb-aplvirtualexhibition.hk) to enhance their understanding of Applied Learning (ApL) courses.

A spokesman for the EDB said, "This event, held from today until July

15, is jointly organised by the EDB and ApL course providers. In view of the current situation of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Exhibition this year is conducted in a new mode via an online platform. A total of 10 course providers are participating in the Virtual Exhibition. Information on more than 40 ApL courses, including course briefs, course introduction videos and student works are exhibited, aiming to help students, parents and teachers understand that ApL is a valued senior secondary elective subject.

"ApL focuses on practical learning elements and links to broad professional and vocational fields with a dual emphasis on theory and practice. It develops students' knowledge, generic skills, positive values and attitudes through simulated or authentic contexts, preparing them for further studies and work," added the spokesman.

The local senior secondary elective subjects comprise over 40 ApL courses which cover six areas of studies: Creative Studies; Media and Communication; Business, Management and Law; Services; Applied Science, and Engineering and Production. There are also courses under Applied Learning (Vocational English) and Applied Learning Chinese (for non-Chinese speaking students).

Last year, the Task Force on Review of School Curriculum and the Task Force on Promotion of Vocational and Professional Education and Training submitted their respective reports to the EDB. ApL was recognised as a valued senior secondary elective subject and recommended for further promotion to enhance public understanding of its value in both reports.

In addition to the Virtual Exhibition, the EDB will continue to promote ApL courses through different channels, including the production of television and radio Announcements in the Public Interest and a series of success stories of ApL graduates entitled "Applied Learning, Apply the Learning!", in which graduates will share their personal stories on how ApL had helped them realise their studies and career aspirations step by step. This will help dispel the misconception that ApL is only for underachievers.

The first two short videos in the series are entitled "Realising aspirations, Broadening horizons" (emm.edcity.hk/media/t/1_27iekizz) and "Equipping ourselves, Pursuing our dreams" (emm.edcity.hk/media/1_9pj46d5r). The former features an ApL graduate who studied the ApL course "Medical Laboratory Science" and the latter an ApL graduate from the course "Film and Videos". Through studying the ApL courses, the two students not only mastered relevant knowledge of the respective fields, but also realised their real interests, thereby laying a solid foundation for further studies and career pursuits. The two videos are now available for viewing on the EDB Educational Multimedia website.

For further details about ApL, please visit the EDB website (www.edb.gov.hk/apl/en).



CFS finds trace of malachite green in grass carp sample

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (April 14) announced that a trace amount of malachite green was found in a grass carp sample. Follow-up is in progress.

A CFS spokesman said, "The CFS collected the above-mentioned grass carp sample from a supermarket in Aberdeen for testing under its routine Food Surveillance Programme. The test result showed that the sample contained a trace amount of malachite green at a level of 3.7 parts per billion."

The spokesman said that the CFS has informed the vendor concerned of the irregularity and instructed the vendor to stop sale of the affected product. The CFS is also tracing the source and distribution of the product concerned. Should there be sufficient evidence, prosecution will be instituted.

Malachite green is a type of industrial dye and has been used for treating infections in fish. Currently, malachite green has been prohibited for use in food-producing animals in many countries. According to the Harmful Substances in Food Regulations (Cap 132AF), no food sold in Hong Kong is allowed to contain malachite green. Offenders will be prosecuted and will be liable to a fine of \$50,000 and to imprisonment for six months upon conviction.

The CFS will continue to follow up on the incident and take appropriate action. Investigation is ongoing.

Opening remarks by SHA at LegCo Finance Committee special meeting

Following is the opening remarks (English translation) by the Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Caspar Tsui, at the special meeting of the Legislative Council Finance Committee today (April 14):

Mr Chairman,

I would like to brief Members about the key areas of our work on home affairs in 2021-22.

Arts and culture

The 2020 Policy Address provided that the Government will support the development of arts technology (art tech). In this connection, an interdepartmental task force has met in February to discuss strategies and measures to promote art tech while a total of \$100 million has also been earmarked for the funds and programmes under the purview of relevant policy bureaux for the promotion of art tech. The East Kowloon Cultural Centre under construction is expected to be commissioned in the second half of 2023 to provide an art tech incubation platform for local artists.

The West Kowloon Cultural District is Hong Kong's most important investment in cultural infrastructure. It will be home to the M+ museum and the Hong Kong Palace Museum, which are expected to open in the end of 2021 and mid-2022 respectively. The two world-class museums will emerge, together with the expanded Hong Kong Museum of Art, as new cultural landmarks along the waterfront of Victoria Harbour.

Sports

Kai Tak Sports Park

For the Kai Tak Sports Park occupying a site of about 28 hectares, the design, build and operate contract already commenced in February 2019. The piling works of the project have largely been completed while the substructure, basement and superstructure works are under way. Given the current construction progress, we envisage that the Sports Park will be completed in the second half of 2023.

Transformation of public play spaces and installation of novel outdoor fitness equipment

The Government has launched a five-year plan to transform more than 170 public play spaces under the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) across the territory to inject more innovative and fun elements into them. Moreover, in response to the public demand for fitness equipment, the LCSD will introduce more novel outdoor fitness equipment suitable for younger

users on a pilot basis.

Five-year plan for upgrading football pitches

Football has long been a popular sport among the public. An amount of \$318 million has been earmarked for the implementation of a five-year plan for upgrading over 70 football pitches under the management of the LCSD, including substantially increasing the number of football pitches meeting international standards and expediting the replacement of artificial turf on football pitches. The LCSD is actively exploring with the relevant works departments on the technical feasibility of carrying out the improvement works and will draw up the implementation details having regard to various factors including the priority and estimated expenditure involved.

Five-Year Plan for Sports and Recreation Facilities

Out of the 26 projects under the Five-Year Plan for Sports and Recreation Facilities, 16 have already received funding approval. We hope that the Legislative Council will approve the funding for four other projects to be submitted within this legislative year as soon as possible.

Support measures for "M" Mark events

All "M" Mark events have been cancelled due to the pandemic since early last year. We have provided a special direct grant with a ceiling of \$2 million for each affected event to alleviate the financial burden of relevant "national sports associations".

Youth development

The list of funded organisations under two relevant schemes was announced in February this year, namely the Funding Scheme for Youth Entrepreneurship in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area and the Funding Scheme for Experiential Programmes at Innovation and Entrepreneurial Bases in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area under the Youth Development Fund. A total of about \$135 million was granted under the two schemes for 30 non-governmental organisations to implement youth entrepreneurship projects or experiential programmes at entrepreneurial bases. It is estimated that subsidies will be provided for about 230 youth start-ups (involving more than 800 Hong Kong young entrepreneurs), with entrepreneurial services made available to about 4 000 young people and experiential projects for a first batch of about 700 young participants. The Home Affairs Bureau also maintains close collaboration with the Youth Development Commission to provide exchange and internship opportunities outside Hong Kong for young people in an effort to broaden their horizons while providing them with exposure to the actual workplace environment. Subject to the development of the pandemic, we will continue to enhance and expand the schemes concerned in the future to better cater for the needs of young people.

My colleagues and I are happy to answer questions from Members. Thank you.

US Dollar Liquidity Facility tender result

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

US Dollar Liquidity Facility tender result:

Tender date	: April 14, 2021 (Wednesday)
Settlement date	: April 15, 2021 (Thursday)
Repayment date	: April 22, 2021 (Thursday)
Tenor	: Seven days
Amount applied	: Nil
Amount allotted	: Nil
Lowest interest rate accepted	: Nil
Highest interest rate accepted	: Nil