

## DH received one report of serious adverse event relating to COVID-19 vaccination

The Department of Health (DH) announced that as of 4pm today (March 19), one report was received from the Hospital Authority (HA) in the past 24 hours regarding a death case, which is a suspected serious adverse event following COVID-19 vaccination.

According to the information provided by the HA, the case involved a 66-year-old man who had history of diabetes, hypertension and hyperlipidaemia. He was found collapsed in a car this morning and was admitted to Alice Ho Miu Ling Nethersole Hospital. He did not respond to resuscitation and passed away. According to information, he received a dose of Comirnaty COVID-19 vaccination at Lung Sum Avenue Sports Centre Community Vaccination Centre three days before admission (March 16) and there was no record that the man complained of feeling unwell during observation at the Vaccination Centre.

The DH has immediately contacted the HA upon the notification to obtain further information on the incident for conducting investigation and assessment. According to the established mechanism, the DH will provide the case to the Expert Committee on Clinical Events Assessment Following COVID-19 Immunisation for conducting causality assessment, and the assessment result will be released in a timely manner.

According to the World Health Organization, Adverse Events Following Immunisation refers to any untoward medical occurrence which follows immunisation and which does not necessarily have a causal relationship with the usage of the vaccine. As a whole population, people with acute medical conditions with various severities are admitted to hospitals every day. With the commencement of the vaccination programme, among those patients with acute medical conditions, there will be those that have received vaccines and reports of such cases might increase with the increasing vaccination uptakes. It is important for the surveillance system in place to monitor these adverse events following COVID-19 vaccinations and to conduct causality assessments based on a scientific and objective approach to ensure that any untoward outcome would not go unnoticed. People with chronic illness should seek medical attention if they feel unwell. They should also adhere to their treatment as prescribed by their doctors.

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## Meetings of Legislative Council and its Committees

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

Details of the meetings of the Legislative Council (LegCo) and its Committees to be held in the LegCo Complex during the week from March 22 to 27 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](http://www.legco.gov.hk)) for the latest details of meetings.

Members of the public can watch or listen to the meetings, including meetings conducted by videoconferencing, via the Webcast system on the LegCo Website. To observe the proceedings of the meetings which are not conducted by videoconferencing at the LegCo Complex, members of the public may call 3919 3399 during office hours to reserve seats.

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## Update on cluster of Multi-drug Resistant Acinetobacter cases in Pamela Youde Nethersole Eastern Hospital

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority.

Regarding an earlier announcement on a cluster of patients confirmed to be carriers of Multi-Drug Resistant Acinetobacter (MDRA) in medical wards, the spokesperson for Pamela Youde Nethersole Eastern Hospital (PYNEH) made the following update today (March 19):

In accordance with prevailing guidelines, the hospital has commenced contact tracing and identified 11 more patients (eight males and three females, aged 56 to 100) in the medical wards to be carriers of MDRA. Six patients are still hospitalised in PYNEH and two patients have been transferred to Tung Wah Eastern Hospital. They are currently under medical surveillance and isolation treatment with stable condition. One patient has been discharged earlier and the other two patients have passed away due to underlying disease.

Following the activation of the Emergency Response Level in public hospitals, visiting arrangements for the wards have been suspended. The hospital will continue to strictly implement the following infection control measures according to established guidelines:

1. Enhanced cleaning and disinfection of the wards 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 wards.

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## **Extension of opening hours and latest traffic arrangements of Tsang Tsui Columbarium during Ching Ming Festival**

The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) today (March 19) said that the opening hours of Tsang Tsui Columbarium under the FEHD will be extended to 7am to 7pm two weeks before and four weeks after the Ching Ming Festival (i.e. the period between March 20 and May 2) to enable grave sweeping by the public and lessen crowd conditions. The FEHD appealed to the public to avoid grave sweeping during the peak period on the day of the Ching Ming Festival, and to stagger grave-sweeping activities over a wider period before and after the festival to reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19.

The FEHD added that the section of Nim Wan Road between Yung Long Road and the access road to Tsang Tsui Columbarium will be closed from 7am to 7pm on Saturdays, Sundays and the public holidays during the aforementioned period. Except for specified vehicles, all other vehicles will be prohibited from entering the road section. While grave sweepers are not allowed to walk or drive to Tsang Tsui Columbarium, KMB will provide a special route, 56S, plying between MTR Tuen Mun Station and Tsang Tsui Columbarium. Members of the public may visit the KMB website for details.

In addition, the opening hours of other public columbaria under the FEHD will be extended to 7am to 7pm two weeks before and after the Ching Ming Festival (i.e. the period between March 20 and April 18). For details of the special traffic and transport arrangements in the vicinities of cemeteries and crematoria during the Ching Ming Festival, please visit the Transport Department website ([www.td.gov.hk](http://www.td.gov.hk)).

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# The Hospital Authority collaborates with Caritas Institute of Higher Education to launch Nursing Professional Education Programme

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The Hospital Authority (HA), in collaboration with the Caritas Institute of Higher Education (CIHE), will launch a Nursing Professional Education Programme (NPEP) this year with the aim of enhancing the professionalism as well as the academic level of the existing HA Nursing Programme of three nursing schools. Graduates will be awarded a Professional Diploma in Nursing after completion of the four-year programme and a top-up Bachelor of Health Sciences with Honours Degree (nursing stream) upon completion of the fifth year of the collaborative programme.

The Director of Cluster Services of the HA, Dr Deacons Yeung, made remarks at the Agreement Signing Ceremony of the NPEP with the CIHE that the collaboration is a major milestone for the development of HA nursing schools, which the existing HA nursing programme will be upgraded from Qualifications Framework Level 4 to Level 5. Not only will it enhance the academic level of the existing HA nursing programme of three nursing schools but will also fulfil the commitment of the HA in providing better quality healthcare services to the Hong Kong public.

Dr Yeung also commended the excellent teaching quality of the CIHE and expects that the collaborative programme will foster many more nursing professionals for public hospitals in taking care of the healthcare needs of local citizens.

HA's three nursing schools are providing a three-year Higher Diploma in Nursing Programme which will be transformed into a four-year NPEP starting from this year, which is equivalent to a degree course under the Qualifications Framework. Graduates will be awarded a top-up Bachelor of Health Sciences with Honours Degree (nursing stream) with an additional year of study, allowing students to continue further studies along the nursing care career path.

The President of the CIHE, Dr Kim Mak, said at the Ceremony that they are happy to collaborate with the HA nursing schools to contribute to the Professional Diploma in Nursing programme through collaborative teaching. With the ever-increasing demand for the nursing workforce, the collaborative programme provides better and early preparation for career advancement.

The Chief Manager of Nursing of the HA, Lawrence Poon, believes the collaborative programme could attract more potential students in joining the nursing workforce by training estimated 300 registered nurses every year that will continue to alleviate the existing work pressure of nursing staff in public hospitals.

Mr Poon also said the collaborative programme allows the HA nursing schools and the CIHE to exchange both professional and academic aspects in enhancing programme quality, for example, simulation training for improving learning effectiveness and extensive HA clinical professional experience, as well as the teaching philosophy and advanced teaching facilities provided by the CIHE.

The HA has three nursing schools at present which are located in Caritas Medical Centre, Queen Elizabeth Hospital and Tuen Mun Hospital.

