

Public hospitals daily update on COVID-19 cases

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

As at noon today (April 20), public hospitals had reported to the Department of Health the admission of 28 patients (10 male and 18 female, aged 19 to 85) in the past 24 hours who met the reporting criteria of COVID-19. Appropriate tests have been arranged for the patients.

There are 421 patients under isolation currently. So far, 630 patients who had COVID-19 confirmed or probable infections have been discharged upon recovery.

The Hospital Authority will maintain close contact with the Centre for Health Protection to monitor the latest developments and to inform the public and healthcare workers on the latest information in a timely manner.

Communications Authority press release

The following is issued on behalf of the Communications Authority:

This press release summarises the decisions of the Communications Authority (CA) following its 94th meeting held in April 2020:

Requirement for free TV licensees to broadcast locally-produced children's programmes temporarily relaxed

The CA announced today (April 20) its decision to temporarily waive, for a period of six months from May 1 to October 31, 2020, the requirement relating to children's programmes broadcast on the integrated Chinese channels of domestic free television programme service (free TV) licensees being wholly of Hong Kong origin. The total broadcasting hours of children's programmes to be provided by a licensee will remain unchanged.

Pursuant to the relevant licence condition in the free TV licences, unless otherwise approved by the CA, a licensee is required to broadcast a maximum of two hours daily of children's programmes on each of the integrated Chinese and English channels (Note), of which not less than 30 minutes daily of such programmes on the integrated Chinese channels are to be wholly of Hong Kong origin ("wholly of Hong Kong origin" requirement).

On March 6, 2020, the CA received a request from HKTVE for waiving the

"wholly of Hong Kong origin" requirement related to the children's programmes on the grounds of the disruption to the availability of human resources and facilities for TV programme production caused by the outbreak of COVID-19. The CA recognises the challenges faced by broadcasters regarding their operations for TV programme productions. A reduction in local production activities following the waiver would also be in line with the Government's advice on social distancing and thus lower the chance of transmitting the disease during the course of TV programme production. That notwithstanding, the CA is mindful that under the present situation, with children staying home following suspension of schools and closures of other public places, demand for children's programmes will be high.

In view of the above, the CA decided to waive the "wholly of Hong Kong origin" requirement related to children's programmes for the next six months with the total broadcasting hours of children's programmes to be provided by a licensee remaining unchanged.

Breach of licence conditions by One TV Media Global Limited (One TV)

The CA decided that One TV, a "non-domestic television programme service" (non-domestic TV) licensee, has breached Conditions 10.1 and 26 of its non-domestic TV licence by failing to provide a non-domestic TV service for a substantial period between July 31, 2019 and February 26, 2020, to provide and maintain adequate standby equipment and necessary repairs or replacements to avoid or minimise service interruption, and to comply with its channel roll-out plan in accordance with its Licensee's Proposal. Taking into account the circumstances of the case and One TV's representations, the CA decided that One TV should be seriously warned to observe the relevant licence conditions more closely. The CA also approved One TV's revised channel roll-out plan of launching its remaining five channels progressively between October 2020 and October 2022.

One TV's non-domestic TV service was suspended on July 31, 2019, due to operational issues. After service resumption on January 10, 2020, there were further service interruptions up to February 26, 2020, caused by ageing equipment. Separately, One TV is only broadcasting one programme channel currently and has failed to provide a total of six channels by May 2018 in accordance with its Licensee's Proposal.

Broadcast complaints

The CA considered two complaint cases in respect of broadcasters' non-compliance with the Generic Code of Practice on Television Programme Standards (TV Programme Code) and the Generic Code of Practice on Television Advertising Standards (TV Advertising Code):

(a) complaints against the television programme "Pentaprism" broadcast on RTHK TV31 & 31A channels of Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) on November 20, 2019. The CA took the view that the complaints in respect of accuracy, incitement of hatred, fairness and factual content of personal view

programmes were substantiated and decided that RTHK should be seriously warned to observe more closely the relevant provisions in the TV Programme Code; and

(b) complaints against television programmes "30 Minutes Meals" broadcast in August and September 2019 on Hong Kong Open TV of Fantastic Television Limited (Fantastic TV). The CA decided that the complaints were justified and that Fantastic TV should be advised to observe more closely the relevant provision in the TV Advertising Code on indirect advertising.

Details of the above cases are at
www.coms-auth.hk/filemanager/en/content_713/appx_20200420a.pdf.

Management and operations of Fantastic TV

The CA received allegations made by a former employee of i-CABLE Communications Limited (i-CABLE) regarding the involvement of i-CABLE in the management and operations of Fantastic TV. Having taken into account the relevant facts and circumstances, Fantastic TV's representations as well as the advice from the external legal adviser of the CA, the CA concluded that there is insufficient evidence based on which it can be reasonably inferred that i-CABLE and its associates exercised control of Fantastic TV or otherwise interfered with the management and operations of Fantastic TV in contravention of the provisions of the Broadcasting Ordinance and the licence of Fantastic TV. Further details are at
www.coms-auth.hk/filemanager/en/content_713/appx_20200420b.pdf.

Note: HK Television Entertainment Company Limited (HKTVE) and Television Broadcasts Limited (TVB) are required to broadcast two hours daily of children's programmes on each of the designated integrated channels (viz. ViuTV, ViuTVsix, Jade and Pearl) while Fantastic Television Limited (Fantastic TV) is required to broadcast one hour daily of children's programmes on each of the designated integrated channels (viz. Hong Kong Open TV and Hong Kong International Business Channel). The requirement regarding Fantastic TV is less onerous as compared with HKTVE and TVB given its use of fixed network for transmission of free TV service versus the use of spectrum by HKTVE and TVB for transmission of service.

CHP announces no new confirmed cases of COVID-19 today

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health has announced that as of 4pm today (April 20), no new confirmed cases of COVID-19 have been recorded, and that the number of cases in Hong Kong remains at 1 026 so far (comprising 1 025 confirmed cases and one probable case).

The CHP again urged members of the public to maintain an appropriate social distance with other people as far as possible in their daily lives to minimise the risk of infection. In particular, they should go out less and avoid social activities such as meal gatherings or other gatherings to reduce the chance of contacting infected persons who may not present any symptoms, and minimise the risk of outbreak clusters emerging in the community.

A spokesman for the CHP said, "Given that the situation of COVID-19 infection remains severe and that there is a continuous increase in the number of cases reported around the world, members of the public are strongly urged to avoid all non-essential travel outside Hong Kong.

"The CHP also strongly urges the public to maintain at all times strict personal and environmental hygiene, which is key to personal protection against infection and prevention of the spread of the disease in the community. On a personal level, members of the public should wear a surgical mask when having respiratory symptoms, taking public transport or staying in crowded places. They should also perform hand hygiene frequently, especially before touching the mouth, nose or eyes.

"As for household environmental hygiene, members of the public are advised to maintain drainage pipes properly, regularly pour water into drain outlets (U-traps) and cover all floor drain outlets when they are not in use. After using the toilet, they should put the toilet lid down before flushing to avoid spreading germs."

The CHP has set up hotlines (2125 1111 and 2125 1122), which operate from 8am to midnight daily, for public enquiries. As at 3pm today, a total of 95 031 calls had been received.

Moreover, the Government has launched the website "COVID-19 Thematic Website" (www.coronavirus.gov.hk) for announcing the latest updates on various news on COVID-19 infection and health advice to help the public understand the latest updates.

To prevent pneumonia and respiratory tract infection, members of the public should always maintain good personal and environmental hygiene. They are advised to:

- Wear a surgical mask when taking public transport or staying in crowded places. It is important to wear a mask properly, including performing hand hygiene before wearing and after removing a mask;
- Perform hand hygiene frequently, especially before touching the mouth, nose or eyes, after touching public installations such as handrails or door knobs, or when hands are contaminated by respiratory secretions after coughing or sneezing;
- Maintain drainage pipes properly and regularly (about once a week) pour about half a litre of water into each drain outlet (U-trap) to ensure environmental hygiene;
- Cover all floor drain outlets when they are not in use;

- After using the toilet, put the toilet lid down before flushing to avoid spreading germs;
 - Wash hands with liquid soap and water, and rub for at least 20 seconds. Then rinse with water and dry with a disposable paper towel. If hand washing facilities are not available, or when hands are not visibly soiled, performing hand hygiene with 70 to 80 per cent alcohol-based handrub is an effective alternative;
 - Cover your mouth and nose with tissue paper when sneezing or coughing. Dispose of soiled tissues into a lidded rubbish bin, then wash hands thoroughly; and
 - When having respiratory symptoms, wear a surgical mask, refrain from work or attending class at school, avoid going to crowded places and seek medical advice promptly.
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Effective Exchange Rate Index

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Monday, April 20, 2020 is 108.7 (same as last Saturday's index).

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Saturday, April 18, 2020 was 108.7 (same as last Friday's index).

HK Public Libraries marks World Book Day and invites public to unlock the secrets of joyful reading (with photos)

To tie in with World Book Day, the Hong Kong Public Libraries (HKPL) of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department has launched a range of exciting activities today (April 20). Built on last year's theme "Discover and Share the Joy of Reading", the new element "Unlock the Secrets@LIBRARY" is introduced this year to help readers experience the joy of reading.

During the fight against COVID-19, the HKPL will launch a series of online programmes to allow members of the public to enjoy reading anytime, anywhere. In the first programme "Interaction with Authors", local young writers Yau Yan-ni and Leung Wai-lok, through video clips, share how reading influences their lives, while children's book author Cheng Wing-sze explores

the benefits of parent-child reading. The videos will be uploaded to the YouTube Channel of HKPL in phases. Online writer Blue God Zi will go live in real time to engage fans and create stories.

In addition, the HKPL organises the 4.23 World Book Day Creative Competition annually to encourage children and youth to broaden their reading scope. Featuring the theme "Growing Up with Reading", this year's competition received an overwhelming response with over 1 400 entries from more than 240 schools. Winning entries were selected from each category, with 25 chosen from junior primary, 15 from senior primary Chinese, 15 from junior secondary Chinese, 12 from senior secondary Chinese, eight each from senior primary English and junior secondary English, and five from senior secondary English. The result of winning entries will be uploaded to www.hkpl.gov.hk/wbd on April 25.

The HKPL is also rolling out the campaign "Take a Break – eReading Corner" to promote e-books. Thirty e-books from two popular online Chinese collections, HyRead and SUEP, will be selected each month. Readers can simply download the HyRead 3 App and log in with their library accounts to borrow the online books anytime at no charge. For more details, please visit www.hkpl.gov.hk/ereading-corner.

Other highlight activities such as "Meet-the-Authors", "Summer Reading Fiesta", "Hong Kong Library Festival" and "Library-on-Wheels" will also be held. Details of the activities are available on the HKPL's website (www.hkpl.gov.hk/en/index.html), "Reading is Joyful" Facebook page (www.facebook.com/readingisjoyful) and Instagram page (www.instagram.com/readingisjoyful).

Members of the public can enjoy reading through the HKPL's vast e-resources. The public can log in to their library accounts to read online or download to computers and mobile devices for e-reading anytime. Hong Kong residents who have never applied for library cards or HKPL e-accounts can visit the HKPL's website to create e-accounts and gain instant access to the diversified digital content. To learn more about HKPL's e-resources, please visit www.hkpl.gov.hk/en/e-resources/index.html.



