

63 Bone Marrow Donors Praised for Selfless Contributions (with photos)

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The Bone Marrow Donor Award Ceremony 2019 organised by the Hong Kong Bone Marrow Donor Registry (HKBMDR) of the Hong Kong Red Cross Blood Transfusion Service (BTS) was held today (September 21), with 63 bone marrow donors received the recognition. In her opening remarks, the Secretary for Food and Health, Professor Sophia Chan paid tribute to all donors for their selfless contributions, which deserve praise and pride from our community. She also hoped to take this opportunity to encourage more citizens to register for bone marrow donation.

The officiating guests of the ceremony also included the Chairman of Hong Kong Red Cross Blood Transfusion Service Governing Committee and Hong Kong Bone Marrow Donor Registry Governing Sub-committee Mr Ambrose Ho and the President of Hong Kong Marrow Match Foundation Professor Alice Chiu. At the ceremony, a pair of bone marrow donor-recipient met each other for the first time and shared their experience.

The human leukocyte antigen (HLA) of donor and recipient must be highly or completely matched for a successful transplantation. "If a patient could not find a donor within the family, he or she has to resort to an unrelated donor. According to statistics, the chance of finding a matching unrelated donor is about one in five to ten thousands only. The odds will be even less than one in one hundred thousand for patients who have rare HLA type." Chief Executive and Medical Director of BTS Dr Lee Cheuk-kwong added. He hoped to see more young people register as bone marrow donor to increase the chance for finding a matched donor for patients.

The world's first Chinese-based unrelated bone marrow donor registry was founded in Hong Kong in 1991. As of June 2019, more than 130,000 people in Hong Kong have registered for voluntary bone marrow donation, and provided matched haematopoietic stem cells for transplantation to 992 local and 119 overseas patients.

Members of the public who are aged between 18 and 60 and in good health condition can register for bone marrow donation at any blood donor centre. The simple registration process includes completion of a registration form, followed by a health screening and blood samples taking for laboratory tests. For information on bone marrow donation, please call 2710 1206 or visit our website at www.ha.org.hk/rcbts.

