

Police meet with Hospital Authority representatives

The Assistant Commissioner of Police (Support), Ms Rebecca Lam Hiu-tong, met with the Director (Quality and Safety) of the Hospital Authority (HA), Dr K L Chung today (June 28) for candid and frank exchanges on how to enhance co-operation and communication. Both sides promised to strengthen co-operation in serving members of the public on the basis of mutual respect and understanding.

At the meeting, the Police referred to the HA a number of cases in which frontline police officers were being impolitely treated by medical staff at the accident and emergency department (A&E) of hospitals.

The HA also reflected to the Police the concerns of their frontline staff at work. Both sides agreed to address the concerns of frontline staff and take appropriate follow-up actions in a positive manner.

Noting the recent cases were merely isolated incidents, both sides stressed that the long-established relationship between the Police and HA has worked well all along and it was their common goal to provide quality service to the public.

In order to strengthen communication and cooperation, both sides are actively considering the setting up of a two-tier communication platform. At headquarters level, management of both parties will meet regularly to discuss on policy issues. At district level, police district which has hospital with A&E service will set up a liaison mechanism with the hospital concerned to enhance mutual trust and cooperation.

The HA has reiterated the importance of setting up police post in hospital, acknowledging that the police officers stationed in police post can greatly assist the medical staff or public seeking medical treatment.

The Police will continue to review the present arrangement temporarily carried out at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and Yan Chai Hospital.

Voter registration for 2019 to close on July 2

The Registration and Electoral Office (REO) today (June 28) urged eligible persons who have not yet registered as electors to submit applications for new registration by the statutory deadline of July 2 so that

their registration particulars can be included in the final register to be released in September this year, and they can vote in the District Council Ordinary Election to be held in November.

Members of the public can submit completed application forms in different ways, such as by fax to 2891 1180; by email to form@reo.gov.hk; or submit in person during office hours to the REO at 10/F, Harbour Centre, 25 Harbour Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong or at 13/F, Kowloonbay International Trade and Exhibition Centre, 1 Trademart Drive, Kowloon Bay, Kowloon.

"The public should avoid sending an email to REO's email account attached with a large number of completed application forms as it may cause delivery failure because of the large file size," an REO spokesman said.

The REO has received a large number of voter registration application emails recently. Due to a significant increase in traffic, the operation of the email account has been temporarily affected. The REO will closely monitor the situation and will speed up the processing of the voter registration application emails.

Members of the public are advised to check, after sending their voter registration application through email, if they receive a confirmation email (as attached) automatically sent by the REO email server. Applicants are advised to resend the voter registration application email or apply through the other ways aforementioned if the confirmation email is not received. The REO will process the applications as long as the application forms reach REO office or REO server by the statutory deadline of July 2.

Forms for voter registration can be obtained from the REO, the District Offices and management offices of public housing estates. They can also be downloaded from the voter registration website (www.voterregistration.gov.hk).

For enquiries, please contact the REO hotline 2891 1001.

CHP investigates local case of Japanese encephalitis

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is investigating this evening (June 28) a local case of Japanese encephalitis (JE) and again urged the public to avoid going to rural areas from dusk till dawn when the vector, which breeds in large water bodies such as rice paddies, is most active.

According to the patient's family, the female patient, aged 63 with good

past health, lives in Cheung Wah Estate, Fanling. She has presented with fever, vomiting and decreased general condition since June 21. She attended the Accident and Emergency Department of North District Hospital on June 23 and was admitted for management subsequently. She is now in a serious condition.

Her cerebrospinal fluid tested positive for immunoglobulin M (IgM) antibodies against JE upon laboratory testing.

Initial enquiries revealed that the patient had no travel history in the incubation period and had no exposure to farm and pig. Her local movements before onset were mainly from her residence to Cheung Wah Market in Fanling and Shek Wu Hui Market in Sheung Shui. Her home contacts have remained asymptomatic and have been put under medical surveillance. Investigations are ongoing.

"We are working with the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) to prevent any possible spread of infection. The FEHD and the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department have been informed for vector investigations, surveillance and control," the spokesman said.

Officers of the CHP will conduct site visit and field investigations by questionnaire surveys at the patient's residence for active case finding and arranging blood tests. A health talk will be held jointly with the FEHD at Cheung Wah Community Hall, Cheung Wah Estate, Fanling at 6.30pm tomorrow (June 29) to deliver health advice to residents and the public.

Persons who have been to the vicinity of Cheung Wah Estate or Cheung Wah Market in Fanling or Shek Wu Hui Market in Sheung Shui with JE symptoms should call the CHP's hotline (2125 1122) operating from 9am to 5.45pm daily starting tomorrow for laboratory investigation or referral as appropriate.

The CHP will issue letters to local doctors and hospitals to alert them to the latest situation.

This is the first JE case recorded in 2019, which was locally acquired. No case was recorded in 2018 and five cases, which were all locally acquired, were recorded in 2017.

JE mainly occurs in the rural and agricultural areas of Asia and the Western Pacific. JE is principally transmitted by the bites of infected mosquitoes. The principal vector is called *Culex tritaeniorhynchus*. The mosquitoes breed where there is abundant water such as rice paddies and become infected by feeding on pigs and wild birds infected with the JE virus. The infected mosquitoes transmit the virus to humans and animals during biting. Symptoms usually start around four to 14 days after being infected.

To prevent JE, the public should take general measures to prevent mosquito bites and avoid going to rural areas from dusk till dawn when the mosquitoes spreading the virus are most active. Travellers to endemic areas should take special note.

The public should:

1. Wear loose, light-coloured, long-sleeved tops and trousers, and use DEET-containing insect repellent on exposed parts of the body and clothing;

2. Take additional preventive measures in outdoor activities:

- Avoid using fragrant cosmetics or skin care products;
- Re-apply insect repellents according to instructions;

3. Special notes during travel:

- If going to affected areas, arrange consultation with a doctor at least six weeks before travel, and have extra preventive measures to avoid mosquito bites;
- Vaccination is recommended for travellers who plan to stay one month or longer in endemic areas, particularly in rural areas, and for short-term (less than one month) travellers if they plan to have significant extensive outdoor or night-time exposure in rural areas during the transmission season of the disease;
- During travel in endemic rural areas, carry a portable bed net and apply permethrin (an insecticide) on it. Permethrin should not be applied to the skin. Seek medical attention promptly if feeling unwell; and
- Travellers feeling unwell, such as having fever, should seek medical advice promptly, and provide travel details to the doctor.

The public may visit the CHP's [JE page](#), [tips for using insect repellents](#), [Facebook Page](#), [YouTube Channel](#) and [Travel Health Service](#) and the FEHD's [Guidebook on Control and Prevention of Mosquito Breeding](#) for more information.

CHP investigates case of human infection of rat Hepatitis E virus

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (June 28) investigating a case of human infection of rat Hepatitis E virus (HEV) and urged members of the public to be vigilant against hepatitis E infection and to strictly observe good personal, food and environmental hygiene.

The case involves a 73-year-old man with underlying illnesses, who had presented with liver function derangement earlier this month. He has been in a stable condition all along and no hospitalisation is required. His blood

sample tested positive for rat HEV upon laboratory testing.

The CHP's epidemiological investigations revealed that the patient resided in Wong Tai Sin. He could neither recall having direct contact with rodents or their excreta, nor had noticed rodents in his residence. He had no travel history during the incubation period.

"Based on the available epidemiological information, the source and the route of infection could not be determined. The CHP's investigation is ongoing," a spokesman for the CHP said.

"The CHP has already informed the Pest Control Advisory Section of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department about the case to carry out rodent control measures and survey as appropriate," the spokesman added.

The exact mode of transmission of rat HEV to humans is unknown at the moment. Possible routes of transmission include ingestion of food or water contaminated by rodents or their excreta, exposure to environments or objects contaminated by rodents or their excreta and direct contact with rodents or their excreta. The usual HEV causing human infection is transmitted mainly through the faecal-oral route.

To prevent hepatitis E infection, members of the public should maintain good personal, food and environmental hygiene. For example, they should wash hands thoroughly before eating, store food properly or in the refrigerator, not leave food at room temperature for a long time, and use 1:99 diluted household bleach for general household cleaning and disinfection as household detergent may not be able to kill HEV. High-risk individuals, such as elderly persons with major underlying illness (especially those who have undergone organ transplantation), pregnant women, patients with chronic liver disease and patients with Glucose-6-Phosphate Dehydrogenase Deficiency (also known as G6PD Deficiency), who are infected with HEV may develop serious illness, so they should exercise extra caution.

The Five Keys to Food Safety should be adopted when handling food, i.e. Choose (choose safe raw materials), Clean (keep hands and utensils clean), Separate (separate raw and cooked food), Cook (cook thoroughly) and Safe Temperature (keep food at a safe temperature), to prevent food-borne diseases.

- Drink only boiled water from the mains or bottled drinks from reliable sources.
- Avoid drinks with ice of unknown origin.
- Purchase fresh food from hygienic and reliable sources. Do not patronise illegal hawkers.
- Clean and wash food thoroughly. Cook food, especially seafood (e.g. shellfish), pork and pig offal, thoroughly before consumption. Avoid raw food or undercooked food.
- Slice raw meat and offal into thin strips to allow thorough cooking, especially during hotpot or congee cooking.

- For sliced pig liver, depending on the thickness and quantity, boil at 100 degrees Celsius or stir-fry in hot skillet/wok for at least three to five minutes.
- Heating to an internal temperature of 90 degrees Celsius for 90 seconds is required for cooking of molluscan shellfish. If possible, remove the shells before cooking as they impede heat penetration. Otherwise, boil at 100 degrees Celsius until their shells open; boil for a further three to five minutes afterwards. Discard any shellfish that do not open during cooking.
- For meat and offal, make sure that juices are clear, not red, and blood is not visible when you cut the cooked meat and offal.
- When having hotpot, use separate chopsticks and utensils for handling raw and cooked foods to prevent cross-contamination.

In general, rodents (such as rats) can transmit multiple diseases to humans directly and indirectly. The public are advised to adopt the following measures:

- Eliminate sources of food and nesting places for rodents in the living environment. Store food in covered containers and handle pet food properly to avoid it becoming food for rodents;
- Store all refuse and food remnants in dustbins with well-fitted covers. Dustbins must be emptied at least once a day;
- Keep premises, especially refuse rooms and stairways, clean. Avoid accumulation of articles;
- Inspect all flowerbeds and pavements for rodent infestation regularly; and
- Avoid the high-risk activities below to reduce rodent contact:
 - Avoid rodent contact and places dirtied with rodent excreta;
 - Avoid handling rodents with bare hands;
 - Wash hands with liquid soap and water immediately after handling animals, and disinfect contaminated areas; and
 - If a wound appears, clean the broken skin immediately and cover it properly with waterproof adhesive dressings.

HyD wins Gold Medal at Silicon Valley International Invention Festival 2019

Following the winning of the Gold Award of the Hong Kong ICT Awards 2019 – Smart Mobility Award (Smart Transportation Stream), and the Honorable Mention Prize of the Chinese Delegation for Invention and Innovation as well as a Gold Medal with Congratulations of the Jury at the 47th International Exhibition of Inventions of Geneva, the intelligent robotic system, the

development of which was initiated by the Highways Department (HyD) and which was co-invented and successfully built by the HyD and the Hong Kong Productivity Council (HKPC), was awarded a Gold Medal at the Silicon Valley International Invention Festival 2019 in the United States yesterday (June 26, Silicon Valley time).

Held annually, the Silicon Valley International Invention Festival 2019 attracts exhibitors from around the globe, including business enterprises, research institutions and universities, to put their inventions and innovations on display. Held between June 24 and 26, this year's exhibition attracted exhibitors from 25 countries and regions, presenting about 600 inventions. The HyD and the HKPC jointly presented at the exhibition the co-invented intelligent robotic system, which is the first of its kind in the world to be fitted with cameras, sensors and robotic arms and able to understand its surroundings with full cognitive abilities for placing and collecting traffic cones and lanterns on public roads.

The HyD always attaches great importance to safety in road works, accords first priority to the safety of engineering site staff and has been striving to enhance safety protection for the carrying out of road works on public roads. Given that the engineering site staff may face a higher risk when setting up and collecting traffic cones and lanterns on public roads late at night, the HyD has therefore been studying the use of advanced technology to adopt an automated approach to replace engineering site staff carrying out relevant works in dangerous situations in order to protect their safety. To this end, the HyD and the HKPC have successfully co-invented the automated intelligent robotic system suitable for use under road conditions in Hong Kong, and are currently carrying out detailed design for the formal application of the intelligent robotic system in road works. Upon completion of design and assembly, site trials will be carried out with a view to commencing its use on public roads in the near future.