

DH reports incident of loss of patient data

The Department of Health (DH) announced today (May 2) a case of lost personal data.

According to a preliminary enquiry by the DH, an appointment book of Li Po Chun Dental Clinic was found missing on April 25. It is believed that the appointment book bears dental appointment information on about 383 patients of a treatment room from January to June 2015, including names and dates of appointment. Some entries may contain patients' Hong Kong Identity Card numbers and dates of birth.

Investigation is ongoing to locate the appointment book and find out the exact cause of the incident. The DH will also examine if the clinic has followed the Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data (PCPD)'s guidelines in the safekeeping of information. The DH will contact the patients involved to alert them to the incident.

The DH has reported the incident to the PCPD and the Police.

"We extended apologies to those patients affected for the inconvenience caused. The DH is very concerned about the incident and will conduct a thorough investigation with a view to avoiding recurrence of similar incidents. We have also stepped up efforts in reminding staff members of the importance of protection of personal data and privacy," a DH spokesman said.

SFST meets with Asian Development Bank senior personnel in Fiji (with photos)

The Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury, Mr James Lau, today (May 2) attended the 52nd Annual Meeting of the Board of Governors of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) in Nadi, Fiji, and met with ADB senior personnel and business leaders attending the meeting there.

Mr Lau held separate meetings in the morning with the Executive Director of the ADB, Mr Tony McDonald, and the Alternate Executive Director of the ADB, Mr Scott Dawson, who represent Hong Kong's constituency on the ADB Board of Directors; the Treasurer of the ADB, Mr Pierre Van Peteghem; the Director General of ADB East Asia Department, Ms Amy Leung, and Deputy Director General, Ms Teresa Kho.

Noting that Hong Kong's financial market has a high level of liquidity

and is governed by effective and transparent regulations that are benchmarked against international standards, Mr Lau encouraged the ADB to continue to make good use of the Hong Kong market in areas such as infrastructure investment and financing.

In addition, describing green finance as a major driver for global growth, Mr Lau highlighted the efforts of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government in promoting green bond development, and sought further collaboration with the ADB on its bond issuance.

He also introduced major initiatives of the Outline Development Plan of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, adding that he expects to see deeper and broader connections in the capital markets in the area, which will bring more opportunities for financial co-operation.

In the afternoon, Mr Lau attended the ADB Constituency Meeting where he briefed attending financial officials on Hong Kong's strengths in green finance and the adoption of Fintech. He said that Hong Kong will be happy to share its experience with the Faster Payment System in making retail fund transfers and payments much quicker and easier. Mr Lau added that virtual banking would also be an area of interest to the many island economies in the constituency, given their geographical spread and the opportunity to move forward in developing their financial services.

On the need for disaster financing as highlighted in the constituency report, Mr Lau emphasised Hong Kong's plan to legislate changes to facilitate the development of an insurance-linked securities market, which would help in the management of catastrophe risks.

Tomorrow (May 3), Mr Lau will attend the opening session of the ADB Annual Meeting and meet with its President, Mr Takehiko Nakao.

Resumption of Air Purification System operation at East Ventilation Building of Central – Wan Chai Bypass and Island Eastern Corridor Link

A spokesman for the Highways Department (HyD) said today (May 2) that remedial works on the Air Purification System (APS) at the East Ventilation Building (EVB) of the Central – Wan Chai Bypass and Island Eastern Corridor Link (CWB) had been completed and that the system had resumed operation today. The APS had been temporarily suspended due to damage to some ventilation fan components in late February 2019. The HyD together with the consultants, contractor and tunnel operator will continue

close monitoring of the system and arrange an efficiency test for the whole APS of the CWB to ensure the smooth operation of the system.

Moreover, the HyD will continue the investigation into the cause of the damage to the APS ventilation fan components at the EVB.

CHP investigates case of food poisoning

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (May 2) investigating a food poisoning case involving two persons who ate mushrooms.

The two female patients, aged 49 and 25, presented with vomiting and diarrhoea around 1.5 hours after having dinner which included mushrooms purchased from a store in Wong Tai Sin district on April 27, and which they cooked at home that evening. The patients sought medical attention at the Accident and Emergency Department of United Christian Hospital on April 27. They have been in a stable condition.

The CHP has also alerted the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department to the incident and the investigations are ongoing.

"Mushroom poisoning is generally acute. Common presentations include gastrointestinal symptoms such as nausea, vomiting and abdominal pain appearing shortly after ingestion. Depending on the mushroom species, patients may also have other symptoms like profuse sweating, hallucination, coma or other neurological symptoms, as well as liver failure. Death may result in severe cases," a CHP spokesman said.

"We advise the public to buy mushrooms from reputable and reliable suppliers and not to buy mushroom products which may be mixed with unknown species. Members of the public should not pick wild mushrooms for consumption as it is difficult to distinguish edible mushroom species from inedible ones. Mixing of edible species with inedible or poisonous species of mushroom will not dilute toxicity. Cooking in most cases does not destroy toxicity," the spokesman added.

"If mushroom poisoning is suspected, the patient should seek immediate medical attention and bring along any available remnant for identification," the spokesman said.

WHO Regional Director visits Department of Health and Centre for Health Protection (with photos)

The World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Director for the Western Pacific, Dr Takeshi Kasai, today (May 2) visited the Department of Health (DH) and the DH's Centre for Health Protection (CHP) to learn about the department's various areas of work and public health programmes as well as to exchange views on priorities for the WHO's work in the Western Pacific.

At a meeting this morning, Dr Kasai was first briefed by the Director of Health, Dr Constance Chan, and the Controller of the CHP, Dr Wong Ka-hing, on the work of the DH. In particular, Dr Kasai learnt about the DH's epidemiological investigations and disease control measures in response to the recent outbreak of measles infection at Hong Kong International Airport.

Dr Kasai noted that the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region recently launched a Preparedness and Response Plan for Dengue Fever to provide a systematic framework to respond with agreed and co-ordinated efforts among different government departments and relevant organisations with a view to reducing the public health impact of dengue fever on the Hong Kong population. He also noted that the DH is actively enhancing seasonal influenza vaccination programmes for the coming winter influenza season.

Furthermore, Dr Kasai introduced the White Paper issued by the WHO's Western Pacific Regional Office (WPRO) last month, which outlines a series of priorities for the WHO's work in the Western Pacific including health security, non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and ageing, and climate change and the environment. He exchanged views with DH representatives on the White Paper, particularly on priorities and concerns specific to Hong Kong, as well as how Hong Kong can contribute its expertise and experience to addressing shared regional challenges.

Accompanied by Dr Chan and Dr Wong, Dr Kasai visited the CHP this afternoon. He toured the Central Notification Office and was briefed by the Surveillance and Epidemiology Branch on their work in monitoring intelligence related to communicable diseases in Hong Kong through notification mechanisms. He then visited the Emergency Hotline Centre to learn more about its health-related enquiry service during public health emergencies.

Proceeding to the Emergency Response Centre under the Emergency Response and Information Branch, Dr Kasai was briefed on the centre's operation and role in the event of major public health emergencies. He also visited the simulation ward of the Infection Control Branch, which was purpose-built for providing infection control training for health care professionals.

