

Key statistics on service demand of A&E Departments and occupancy rates of medical wards in public hospitals

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

During the winter surge, the Hospital Authority is closely monitoring the service demand of Accident and Emergency Departments and the occupancy rate of medical wards in public hospitals. Key service statistics are being issued daily for public information. Details are in the appended table.

Red flag hoisted at Clear Water Bay Second Beach

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible:

Here is an item of interest to swimmers.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (December 23) that due to big waves, red flag has been hoisted at Clear Water Bay Second Beach in Sai Kung District. Beach-goers are advised not to swim at the beach.

CFS urges public not to consume a batch of imported frozen fish fingers suspected to contain large fish bones

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department today (December 22) urged the public not to consume a batch of frozen fish fingers from the United Kingdom (UK) as it was suspected to contain large fish bones. The trade should stop using or selling the affected batch of product immediately if they possess it.

Product details as follows:

Product name: 6 Chunky Battered Haddock Fish Fingers

Brand: Waitrose

Country of origin: UK

Importer: PARKnSHOP (HK) Limited

Weight: 300 grams per pack

Best-before date: November, 2019

"The CFS received a notification from the Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASFF) of the European Commission that the above-mentioned product might contain large fish bones and is being recalled. According to the information provided by the RASFF, a local importer, PARKnSHOP (HK) Limited has imported the affected product," a spokesman for the CFS said.

The CFS immediately contacted the importer concerned for follow up. Preliminary investigation found that the importer had imported the affected batch of product and had already stopped selling and removed from shelves the affected batch of product. It will initiate a recall according to CFS' advice. Members of the public may call the importer's hotline at 2606 8658 during office hours for enquiries about the recall.

The CFS will alert the trade to the incident and continue to follow up and take appropriate action. Investigation is ongoing.

Suspected MERS cases reported

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (December 22) reported three suspected cases of Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS), and again urged the public to pay special attention to safety during travel, taking due consideration of the health risks in the places of visit. The cases are detailed below:

Sex	Male	Male	Female
Age	24	60	48
Affected areas involved	Dubai and Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates	Dubai, United Arab Emirates	Dubai, United Arab Emirates
High-risk exposure	Camel ride	Nil	Camel ride
Hospital	Prince of Wales Hospital	Princess Margaret Hospital	Tuen Mun Hospital
Condition	Stable	Stable	Stable

MERS-Coronavirus preliminary test result	Negative	Negative	Negative
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"Travellers to the Middle East should avoid going to farms, barns or markets with camels; avoid contact with sick persons and animals, especially camels, birds or poultry; and avoid unnecessary visits to healthcare facilities. We strongly advise travel agents organising tours to the Middle East to abstain from arranging camel rides and activities involving direct contact with camels, which are known risk factors for acquiring MERS Coronavirus (MERS-CoV)," a spokesman for the CHP said.

Locally, the CHP's surveillance with public and private hospitals, with practising doctors and at boundary control points is firmly in place. Inbound travellers and members of the public who recently visited the Middle East and developed fever or lower respiratory symptoms within 14 days will be classified as suspected MERS cases. They will be taken to public hospitals for isolation and management until their specimens test negative for MERS-CoV.

Travellers to affected areas should maintain vigilance, adopt appropriate health precautions and take heed of personal, food and environmental hygiene. The public may visit the MERS pages of the [CHP](#) and its [Travel Health Service](#), MERS statistics in [affected areas](#), the CHP's [Facebook Page](#) and [YouTube Channel](#), and the World Health Organization's [latest news](#) for more information and health advice. Tour leaders and tour guides operating overseas tours are advised to refer to the CHP's [health advice on MERS](#).

[Transcript of remarks by SLW on enhanced integrated vocational and skills training services for persons with disabilities](#)

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Dr Law Chi-kwong, on the proposed integrated vocational and skills training service model for persons with disabilities after attending a radio programme this morning (December 22):

Reporter: Mr Law, how do you respond to criticisms of lack of consultation with regards to the move of the Shine Skills Centre (Kwun Tong)? Can you tell us the new size and scope of service of the new centre for the disabled

community, please? Thank you.

Secretary for Labour and Welfare: For all consultation, we have to find a right time to engage the appropriate stakeholders. In fact, if you take the whole development (Kwun Tong composite development project), it's a very comprehensive development area. That involves a very different number of stakeholders. In the past year, I have to say, we actually have engaged different stakeholders at the right time.

When we haven't yet made a certain decision on the directions, the issue about consultation is not actually there. I have to say that, for this particular case like the Shine Skills Centre (Kwun Tong), the current cohort of trainees in the centre would not be affected, not even those who will be coming next year in 2019, they won't be affected either. It would not be possible, for a very preliminary idea, to engage the whole community of special school children on this particular development. So, I do think the approach that we have made and been trying to inform the community and the various stakeholders at the right time is appropriate.

Reporter: And also the size and the scope of service? Thank you.

Secretary for Labour and Welfare: For the scope of service, as I have mentioned last month, the new service will be a blended version of the existing Integrated Vocational Training Centres (subvented by Social Welfare Department) and the Shine Skills Centres (operated by Vocational Training Council), which will have the advantage of both types of service. We have actually announced it on Friday (December 21) about the agreement that has been reached between the management of the Vocational Training Council and the Government.

The direction will be able to enhance the number of trainings, particularly for those training that are tied with the Qualifications Framework; strengthen the post-training service, particularly in terms of employment support for one to at most three years (on a need basis) of follow-up services; and also some support services after they have graduated and come back for some improved/enhanced training ("up-skilling" or "re-skilling" courses). So, this direction has been agreed and the details have yet to be developed in the coming months.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)