

Cluster of Rhinovirus cases in Castle Peak Hospital

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The spokesperson for Castle Peak Hospital made the following announcement today (December 19):

Five patients (aged 37 to 60) in a male forensic psychiatric ward presented with respiratory symptoms since December 16. Appropriate viral tests were arranged for the patients and the test results for three patients were positive for Rhinovirus. The patients concerned are being treated under isolation with stable condition.

Admission to the ward has been suspended and restricted visiting has been imposed. Infection control measures have already been stepped up according to established guidelines. All other patients in the ward are under close surveillance.

The cases have been reported to the Hospital Authority Head Office and the Centre for Health Protection for necessary follow-up.

Government's response to implementation of enhancement measures of MTRCL on four-line signalling system service disruption

Regarding the incident of signalling system failure on MTR Island, Kwun Tong, Tsuen Wan and Tseung Kwan O Lines on October 16, 2018, the Executive Review Panel (Panel) set up by the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL) has completed the investigation. The MTRCL today (December 19) submitted a detailed report to the Government on the Panel's investigation on the cause of the incident, its review on the contingency and information dissemination arrangements on the day, and its recommendations for continuous improvement.

The Transport and Housing Bureau, the Transport Department (TD) and the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD) have looked into the report and accepted the investigation outcome of the Panel on the cause of the incident. Suggestions made by the Government on the review of the incident have also been agreed by the MTRCL and were reflected in the report.

The Government was concerned about the incident on October 16 and requested the MTRCL to conduct in-depth investigation. During the MTRCL's investigation, the EMSD monitored the investigation work including reviewing the signalling system data records on the incident day and observing the simulation test conducted by the MTRCL and overseas experts from the signalling system suppliers. The MTRCL also arranged for overseas and local experts to assist in the investigation.

The report confirmed that the incident had no correlation with the signalling system upgrading project and its testing. That said, the EMSD has requested the MTRCL to conduct a comprehensive examination of the signalling system equipment, and to continue to closely monitor and maintain the relevant systems during the signalling system upgrading project and its testing, including deploying additional personnel when necessary to stand by in critical stations' signalling equipment rooms to reboot the computers and expedite the recovery works.

In light of the experience gained, the TD is reviewing the existing contingency plan with the MTRCL, including the provision of free shuttle buses in affected stations, especially those with little alternative public transport when there is prolonged service delay. The review is expected to be completed by mid-2019.

The TD and the EMSD will closely monitor the MTRCL in implementing the enhancement measures of the report in order to avoid recurrence of the incident, as well as the enhancement of its contingency and information dissemination arrangements during incidents.

According to the Service Performance Arrangement under the MTR Fare Adjustment Mechanism, the MTRCL will be penalised for causing any service disruption of 31 minutes or more due to system breakdown or other human factors. As the setting of the signalling systems of Tseung Kwan O Line and part of Kwun Tong Line is different, coupled with the inter-connection among the other three lines, it is thus calculated on the basis of four incidents. The MTRCL has set aside \$8 million to give concessions to passengers next year.

CS visits Hong Kong Port of HZMB

The Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Matthew Cheung Kin-chung, today (December 19) visited the Hong Kong Port of the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge (HZMB) to be briefed on the overall traffic diversion plan prepared by government departments in anticipation of a surge in passenger traffic during Christmas and New Year.

Accompanied by the Secretary for Transport and Housing, Mr Frank Chan Fan, Mr Cheung first visited the Passenger Clearance Building for a briefing

on the facilities of the building. He then proceeded to the check-in service counters of the Hong Kong International Airport and the visitor centre of the Hong Kong Tourism Board to observe how these facilities assist passengers in checking in baggage, obtaining boarding passes and receiving information on accommodation and sightseeing. He was also provided an update on the business operation of shops in the Passenger Clearance Building.

Later, he arrived at the Hong Kong Port Public Transport Interchange (South) to receive a briefing on the carrying capacity of various types of public transport during passenger peak periods. He also took the opportunity to tour the surroundings of the Passenger Clearance Building and note the study progress of providing food truck services for passengers in areas nearby.

Following his visit to the Departure Hall to inspect clearance procedures for passengers by officers of the Immigration Department and the Customs and Excise Department, Mr Cheung moved on to the cross-boundary coach ticketing counter to observe how travel agencies made use of the pre-booked cross-boundary coach service to purchase cross-boundary coach tickets in advance for tour groups departing the Hong Kong Port for the Zhuhai Port so that they could arrive at the Zhuhai Port in an orderly manner.

He was also briefed at the pick-up areas for shuttle buses and cross-boundary coaches on the queuing, boarding and alighting arrangements for passengers during peak periods.

Mr Cheung was pleased to note the close co-operation established between the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge Authority and governments of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao. He also expressed confidence in government departments' joint efforts in meeting the demand arising from the peak periods of passenger flow during the holiday season and maintaining the smooth operation of the Hong Kong Port of HZMB.

DEVB publishes "Street Tree Selection Guide"

The Greening, Landscape and Tree Management Section (GLTMS) of the Development Bureau (DEVB) today (December 19) published the "Street Tree Selection Guide". It features 80 less commonly used tree species suitable for street planting in Hong Kong, providing a reference for Government departments and interested parties in selecting street tree species.

The purpose of the Guide is to improve the resilience of Hong Kong's urban forest by maximising species diversity under the "right tree, right place" principle, with a view to improving ecological health upstream and minimising tree risks downstream.

A spokesperson for the DEVB said, "Currently, our roadside urban forest is dominated by a small range of 20 common tree species, which altogether account for about half of the trees recorded. Limited vegetation diversity makes our urban forest more vulnerable to outbreaks of pests and diseases and diminishes soil quality, consequently leading to higher maintenance efforts.

"The effects of more frequent adverse weather brought by climate change and ageing street tree assets are challenges that we need to face. We need to make our urban forest resilient, adaptable and sustainable to meet these challenges."

In Hong Kong's compact and dense urban environment street trees have to withstand harsh roadside conditions such as urban heat, drought, wind, pollution and waterlogging. The 80 tree species recommended are assessed against these essential criteria as well as other desirable values including their ornamental value, ecological value and canopy size. The tree species listed in the Guide are not meant to be exhaustive. Users are welcome to suggest other suitable species that meet the selection criteria set out in the Guide.

The Guide comprises a set of user-friendly and graphically presented datasheets setting out the basic information for each selected tree species, including resilience to different types of urban planting environment, distinctive character, species features and colourful photographic image.

The Guide also comes with a software application – the Street Tree Selection Matrix – for users to modify the selection criteria to suit specific sites such as microclimate or other specific requirements.

The Guide is now available on the GLTMS website as follows – www.greening.gov.hk/en/knowledge_database/street_tree_selection_guide.html. The full Chinese version will be available by the first quarter of 2019.

Appointments to Standing Commission on Civil Service Salaries and Conditions of Service and Standing Committee on Disciplined Services Salaries and Conditions of Service

The Government announced today (December 19) that the Chief Executive has made appointments and re-appointments to the Standing Commission on Civil Service Salaries and Conditions of Service (SCCS) and the Standing Committee on Disciplined Services Salaries and Conditions of Service (SCDS).

The Chief Executive has appointed Dr Pang Yiu-kai as Chairman of the SCCS, Dr Miranda Lou Lai-wah and Mr Joseph Luc Ngai as members, and re-appointed Mr Dick Lee Ming-kwai as a member of the SCCS.

The Chief Executive has appointed Dr Chui Hong-sheung, an incumbent member of the SCDS, as Chairman of the SCDS. The Chief Executive has also appointed to the SCDS three new members, namely Mr Mac Chan Ho-ting, Mr Alan Lui Siu-lun and Mr Wilfred Wong Kam-pui, with Mr Wong being appointed at the same time as Chairman of the General Disciplined Services Sub-Committee of the SCDS.

Six serving members of the SCDS, namely, Mr Victor Lam Hoi-cheung, Ms Margaret Cheng Wai-ching, Ms Ivy Cheung Wing-han, Ms Quince Chong Wai-yan, Ms Melissa Kaye Pang and Mr Philip Tsai Wing-chung, are re-appointed. Mr Lam and Ms Cheng are also re-appointed as Chairman of the ICAC Sub-Committee and Chairman of the Police Sub-Committee of the SCDS respectively.

All the above appointments will be for a term of two years from January 1, 2019 to December 31, 2020.

The Government expressed its gratitude and appreciation to retiring SCCS Chairman Dr Wilfred Wong Ying-wai and SCCS members Mr Joseph Lo Kin-ching and Mr Wilfred Wong Kam-pui, as well as retiring SCDS Chairman Ms Teresa Ko Yuk-yin and SCDS member Mr Thomas Jefferson Wu, for their invaluable contributions to the work of the SCCS and the SCDS respectively.

The SCCS tenders advice to the Chief Executive on matters concerning pay and conditions of service of non-directorate civilian civil servants. Other serving members are Mrs Edith Chan Ngan Man-ling, Mr Ignatius Chan Tze-ching, Ms Christina Maisenne Lee, Mr Lee Luen-fai, Ms Angela Lee Wai-yin, Ms Elaine Lo Yuen-man and Mr Tony Tse Wai-chuen. The SCDS advises the Chief Executive on issues relating to the salaries and conditions of service of the disciplined services. Other serving members include Ms Dilys Chau Suet-fung and Professor Chong Tai-leung.