

DH calls on smokers to support World No Tobacco Day

The Department of Health (DH) today (May 31) reminded members of the public that smoking may cause heart disease, stroke and many kinds of non-communicable diseases, and called for smokers to support World No Tobacco Day by quitting smoking as early as possible for the health of themselves and their families and friends.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has marked May 31 as World No Tobacco Day annually to highlight the health risks associated with tobacco use and advocate effective policies to reduce tobacco consumption. The theme this year is "Tobacco and heart disease".

"It is a well-established fact that smoking is an important risk factor in many chronic diseases, including heart disease and other cardiovascular diseases. That also includes ischaemic heart disease (IHD) (also known as coronary heart disease). Smoking raises the level of lipids in blood while the toxins in the tobacco damage the cells that line the coronary arteries, causing accumulation of fatty deposits in the inner walls of coronary arteries and narrowing of lumens. It will obstruct blood flow through the coronary arteries, causing chest pain when there is insufficient oxygen to the heart muscle and finally muscle damage. Similarly, stroke may be triggered if the blood flow of blood vessels in the brain is hindered," a spokesman for the DH said.

"In Hong Kong, heart disease was the third leading cause of death in 2016, amounting to 6 200 deaths (about 13 per cent of deaths from all causes). As early as 1998, a local study showed that the risk of dying from IHD in male smokers aged 35 to 69 was nearly 60 per cent higher than that of non-smoking males. Among women, the risk was nearly doubled for smokers compared to non-smokers. For stroke, the same local study showed that the risk of dying from stroke in male smokers aged 35 to 69 was 75 per cent higher than that of non-smoking males, while the comparative risk from women was nearly 30 per cent higher," the spokesman added.

In addition, the spokesman emphasised that the hazards of secondhand smoke cannot be neglected. According to the WHO, tobacco use and secondhand smoke exposure contribute to more than 10 per cent of all heart disease deaths. A study revealed that the risks of dying from IHD and stroke in non-smokers aged 60 or over who were exposed to secondhand smoke at home were nearly 40 per cent and 50 per cent higher respectively than the risks for those who were not. The result also showed that the risk of a non-smoker dying from stroke increased if the number of smokers in the same household increased.

"Secondhand smoke from smokers will harm family members as well. Smokers should quit smoking as early as possible for their own sake and that of their

families. Besides, the Government has launched 'Towards 2025: Strategy and Action Plan to Prevent and Control Non-communicable Diseases in Hong Kong' since May 4 this year. It defines nine local targets on four non-communicable diseases (namely cancers, cardiovascular diseases, diabetes and chronic respiratory diseases) and four behavioural risk factors, to be achieved by 2025. One of the targets is to achieve a 30 per cent relative reduction in the prevalence of current tobacco use in persons aged 15 and above," the spokesman urged.

Smokers who intend to quit smoking can call the DH's Integrated Smoking Cessation Hotline on 1833 183. The hotline is operated by registered nurses, providing professional counselling services on smoking cessation. Cases will be referred to suitable social service agencies for follow-up when necessary.

SFST continues San Francisco visit to forge financial collaboration (with photos)

The Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury, Mr James Lau, continued his visit to San Francisco, the United States, today (May 30, San Francisco time).

Mr Lau started the day by visiting Wells Fargo Innovation Labs, which comprises a team of product strategists, developers and project managers to enhance the banking services of Wells Fargo through innovative use of technologies for meeting customer needs.

Mr Lau met with its Head of Strategic Payment Solutions, Mr Ashish Sharma, and the R&D team experts to learn more about the bank's research projects and their application of financial technology (Fintech) for a better customer experience. Wells Fargo is one of the largest banks in the United States and was ranked 25th in the Fortune 500 in 2017.

Mr Lau then addressed a business luncheon hosted by the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in San Francisco to promote Hong Kong as a premier global financial hub in Asia. He told the attending business leaders that Hong Kong has pledged to develop into a preferred listing platform for both initial public offerings and secondary listings.

He also highlighted Hong Kong's active role in enabling the financial services sector to capitalise on the vast opportunities presented by the global trend of green financing and the Belt and Road Initiative.

Later in the afternoon, Mr Lau visited the ClimateWorks Foundation and met with its Director of Sustainable Finance, Mr Ilmi Granoff, and Associate

Director, Mr Tim Stumhofer. He briefed them on Hong Kong's commitment to develop into a regional hub for green finance and efforts in promoting the green bond market.

In the evening, Mr Lau attended a dinner with Directors of the Hong Kong Association of Northern California to learn more about the business environment in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Mr Lau will continue his visit to San Francisco tomorrow (May 31, San Francisco time) before arriving back in Hong Kong on June 2.



[LCSD launches new anti-touting measures](#)

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) today (May 31) announced the implementation of two more new measures to combat touting activities.

Starting from June 20, members of the public will no longer be allowed to book the department's fee-charging leisure and sports facilities on behalf of another person using a copy of other's identity document at Leisure Link booking counters in leisure venues or District Leisure Services Offices. The new measure aims to prevent "queuing gangs" from abusing the existing arrangement. Hirers will have to produce their original identity documents when making a booking at any booking counter. They may also choose to use the Leisure Link e-Services System (LLES) or the self-service kiosks to book the facilities.

The department will also launch on the same day (June 20) the Turf Soccer Pitches Balloting Pilot Scheme in response to strong public demand for turf soccer pitches. Sessions at turf soccer pitches will be allocated by balloting while the remaining sessions will be available for booking after the deadline on a first-come, first-served basis, with a view to providing a fair and impartial booking mechanism.

Under the pilot scheme, registered Leisure Link patrons can submit their balloting applications for turf soccer pitches (except multi-purpose turf pitches) through the LLES. Patrons can enquire about sessions at turf soccer pitches available for balloting on the 15th day from the day of checking. They can then submit their balloting applications on the following day. For example, patrons can check on July 1 the sessions available at turf soccer pitches on July 15 through the LLES and then submit their balloting applications on July 2. Each Leisure Link patron can only apply for one session of turf soccer pitch on each balloting date. Sessions will be allocated by computer balloting on the day following the application deadline. Successful applicants will receive an email notification in the morning of the balloting day and should confirm the booking with payment through the LLES by the deadline (i.e. 11pm on the following day of balloting). Any sessions on hold without payment confirmation and other remaining sessions will be made available for booking after the deadline through various Leisure Link booking channels within 10 days on a first-come, first-served basis.

For the balloting procedures of the pilot scheme and information on the turf soccer pitches available for balloting, please visit the [LCSD webpage](#) or call the enquiry hotline at 2679 6822.

Members of the public who are interested in booking turf soccer pitches are urged to register as Leisure Link patrons as soon as possible. Applicants may register online, at Leisure Link Self-service Kiosks or in person at the Leisure Link Services Centre with their Hong Kong Identity Card. They may also apply by sending a completed application form by post or by fax. For detailed information, please visit the [LCSD webpage](#).

A spokesman for the LCSD said that the department will continue to monitor the situation and introduce more anti-touting measures when necessary.

Fixed penalties for traffic contraventions to increase tomorrow

A spokesman for the Transport and Housing Bureau today (May 31) reminded members of the public that the fixed penalties for five congestion-related traffic contraventions under the Fixed Penalty (Criminal Proceedings) Ordinance will be revised with effect from tomorrow (June 1).

The resolution to increase such fixed penalties was passed by the Legislative Council on January 17. The relevant traffic contraventions and the revised penalty charges are as follows:

Item	Traffic Contravention	Fixed Penalty Charge
1	Unlawfully entering box junction	Raised from \$320 to \$400
2	U-turn causing obstruction	
3	Unauthorised stopping at bus stop/public light bus stand/taxi stand/public light bus stopping place	
4	Stopping public bus, public light bus or taxi longer than necessary when picking up/setting down passengers	
5	Picking up/setting down passengers in restricted zone	

The spokesman stressed that traffic congestion has been worsening in recent years and it is necessary to raise the fixed penalties for the congestion-related traffic contraventions to restore their deterrent effect. The Government will continue to study the timely increase of the fixed penalties for other congestion-related traffic contraventions.

Furthermore, all Magistrates' Courts will cease to collect penalties in relation to traffic contravention fixed penalty notices issued by the Hong Kong Police Force or the Housing Department on or after June 1. If the person concerned has not paid the fixed penalty before the prescribed deadline, or wishes to dispute the legal liability of the traffic contravention, court proceedings will commence. For all cases in which court proceedings have commenced, members of the public may continue to pay the penalties at the Magistrates' Courts concerned in accordance with the instructions of the courts.

"Members of the public can make penalty payments by means listed on the fixed penalty notices, including bank automated teller machines; PPS; the Internet; phone-banking services provided by banks; by post to PO Box No.

28000, Gloucester Road Post Office, Hong Kong; and at counters of post offices (other than mobile post offices) personally or by an agent," the spokesman said.

SFH speaks on increase of medical students

Following is the transcript of remarks made by the Secretary for Food and Health, Professor Sophia Chan, at the Legislative Council Complex today (May 31):

Reporter: Professor, the Government has proceeded to increase the number of medical students. How many places will the Government increase?

Secretary for Food and Health: The Government has published the Report of Strategic Review on Healthcare Manpower Planning and Professional Development last year. In the report, it is stated that some healthcare professionals will be facing manpower shortage in terms of the demand of healthcare services in the coming years. Therefore, we have recommended an increase of the number of students in medical, nursing and dentistry as well as some other allied health professionals in the coming triennium. The final number will be announced by the Education Bureau. Of course, there are a number of factors we have to consider when deciding the number of places to be increased in the coming triennium. First of all, according to the report, we have a supply shortage. Secondly, the teaching facilities of the universities. So, in the recent Budget Speech, the Financial Secretary has already pledged resources for the three universities to build up more teaching facilities in preparation for the increase in the number of these healthcare professional students. Thirdly, the training curriculum of many of these healthcare professionals involves clinical practicum. Therefore, we also have to liaise with practicum sites, such as hospitals under the Hospital Authority, in order to provide adequate clinical education for all these students. All these factors have to be taken into consideration before we decide on the final number of students to be increased. Thank you.

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