

## **Applications for Mainland University Study Subsidy Scheme close on September 8**

The Education Bureau (EDB) today (August 29) reminded eligible Hong Kong students who are interested in applying for a subsidy under the Mainland University Study Subsidy Scheme (MUSSS) for the 2023/24 academic year to submit their applications via the MUSSS Electronic Application Platform ([musss.edb.gov.hk](https://musss.edb.gov.hk)) or send the completed application forms by post to the EDB on or before September 8.

A spokesperson for the EDB said that it was envisaged that the MUSSS would benefit most Hong Kong students pursuing undergraduate studies on the Mainland with different financial needs.

Eligible students may apply for a means-tested subsidy (only for those students who have passed the means test) or a non-means-tested subsidy under the MUSSS. The subsidy under the MUSSS is granted on a yearly basis. The subsidised period covers the normal duration of the undergraduate programme pursued by the student concerned in the designated Mainland institution. Eligible applicants may only receive either a means-tested subsidy or a non-means-tested subsidy in the same academic year.

Details of the MUSSS are available on the EDB website ([www.edb.gov.hk/musss](https://www.edb.gov.hk/musss)). The EDB is expected to notify individual applicants of the application results by the first quarter of 2024.

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## **Hospital Authority and Macao Health Bureau renew five-year collaboration agreement (with photo)**

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The Hospital Authority (HA) and the Health Bureau of the Government of the Macao Special Administrative Region renewed a five-year (2023-2028) collaboration agreement yesterday (August 28). The agreement covers initiatives including continuously strengthening the developments of healthcare and medical administrative management between the two places and fully supporting the healthcare collaboration in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA), including various disciplines such as academic

and skills exchanges, manpower training, information exchanges, medical administration, emergency healthcare and in-kind support, case referrals and exchanges on treatment and information on infectious diseases, etc.

The HA Chairman, Mr Henry Fan, and the HA Chief Executive, Dr Tony Ko, led a delegation to the Health Bureau of Macao to attend the collaboration agreement signing ceremony. A high-level meeting was held during the ceremony to summarise the achievements and set the future direction for co-operation. The two parties signed the first collaboration agreement in 2007, establishing and maintaining a close partnership. Subsequently, the agreement was renewed in 2013 and 2018. Dr Ko and the Director of the Health Bureau of Macao, Dr Lo Iek-long, renewed the collaboration agreement for five years yesterday.

Mr Fan said, "Since 2007, the HA has signed the collaboration agreement with the Health Bureau of Macao. It is a pleasure to see the continuation of exchanges and collaboration between the two places. The HA is proactively in line with the healthcare policies of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region to enhance the collaboration with relevant healthcare and medical institutions in different cities in the GBA, and accelerate the development of public hospitals in order to better integrate itself into the national development. We hope to maintain close collaboration with the Health Bureau of Macao in the future based on the profound foundation created in the past to further upgrade the professional level of public hospital services in Hong Kong and Macao to achieve concerted development and mutual benefits."

On the training of healthcare talent, Hong Kong and Macao have each held a wide variety of specialist doctor training activities in the past to promote the exchanges and training of medical professionals in the two places. The Health Bureau of Macao has also arranged for doctors to go to Hong Kong for specialist training and attend symposiums multiple times. The HA is considering enhancing the arrangements for the specialist training of medical professionals nominated by the Health Bureau of Macao to Hong Kong, so as to further strengthen the nurturing and academic exchanges of healthcare talent between the two places.

Mr Fan said that through the renewal of the collaboration agreement, the HA hopes to keep close ties with the Health Bureau of Macao in the medical and healthcare field, learn from each other, enhance the quality of healthcare services in both places and cope with the challenges posed by an ageing population and make greater contributions for the well-being of the public.



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## [LegCo Panel on Welfare Services to conduct duty visit to Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area](#)

The following is issued on behalf of the Legislative Council Secretariat:

The delegation of the Legislative Council (LegCo) Panel on Welfare Services and the delegation of the Labour and Welfare Bureau will conduct a three-day duty visit tomorrow (August 30) to Mainland cities of the Greater Bay Area (GBA), including Guangzhou, Zhaoqing and Foshan.

The purpose of the duty visit is for members to learn about the provision of elderly and rehabilitation services in the Mainland, as well as the needs of Hong Kong residents who retire there. Also, the delegations will exchange views with elderly and rehabilitation service providers in Mainland cities of GBA to learn about their challenges and practices in delivering such services, and explore opportunities with Mainland cities in GBA for collaboration in areas such as elderly care, rehabilitation services and social welfare.

The delegations will visit the following places from August 30 to September 1 (Wednesday to Friday):

### Guangzhou

- Clifford Estates (meeting with retired Hong Kong residents) and Clifford Elderly Care Centre in Clifford Hospital;
- Department of Civil Affairs of Guangdong Province;
- Yuexiu Haiyuehui – a health and wellness project for the elderly; and
- A model ageing-in-place integrated service centre in Guangzhou.

### Zhaoqing

- The Hong Kong Jockey Club Helping Hand Zhaoqing Home for the Elderly.

Foshan

- Shanqi Nursing Home in Shunde District; and
- Tianfu retirement community in Chancheng District.

The Panel on Welfare Services' delegation is led by the Chairman of the Panel, Mr Tang Ka-piu. Other participating members include the Deputy Chairman of the Panel, Reverend Canon Peter Douglas Koon, Panel members Mr Luk Chung-hung, Ms Doreen Kong, Dr Tik Chi-yuen, Mr Chau Siu-chung, Dr David Lam, Ms Lam So-wai, Mr Kenneth Leung, Mr Chan Pui-leung and Ms Lillian Kwok; as well as non-Panel members Mr Shiu Ka-fai and Ms Carmen Kan. The Labour and Welfare Bureau's delegation is led by the Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Mr Chris Sun.

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## **CHP reviews local HIV/AIDS situation in second quarter 2023**

A total of 93 cases of Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) infection were reported to the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) in the second quarter of 2023, taking the cumulative total of HIV infections reported locally to 11 830 since 1984.

Of the 93 additional cases involving 72 males and 21 females, 39 (41.9 per cent) acquired the infection via homosexual or bisexual contact, 31 (33.3 per cent) via heterosexual contact, and three (3.2 per cent) via injecting drug use. The routes of transmission of the remaining 20 cases have yet to be determined due to incomplete information.

The new cases were mainly reported by four sources: public hospitals, clinics and laboratories (47 cases); private hospitals, clinics and laboratories (12 cases), the AIDS Unit under the DH (11 cases), and the Social Hygiene Clinics under the DH (11 cases). Also, 75 newly reported HIV-infected people (81.5 per cent) have already received HIV specialist services at the DH or the Hospital Authority.

Regarding cases of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), 24 new cases were reported in this quarter, of which 11 cases (45.8 per cent) were attributed to homosexual or bisexual contact, 11 cases (45.8 per cent) were related to heterosexual contact, and one case (4.2 per cent) was associated with injecting drug use. The route of transmission of the remaining case has yet to be determined due to incomplete information. In this quarter, the most common AIDS-defining illness remained as Pneumocystis pneumonia. Since 1985,

a cumulative total of 2 441 confirmed AIDS cases has been reported in Hong Kong.

Reviewing the latest HIV/AIDS situation in Hong Kong, a spokesman for the CHP said, "Sexual transmission remained the major mode of HIV transmission. Members of the public should use condoms consistently and properly to reduce the risk of acquiring HIV. HIV is the cause of AIDS. Early HIV treatment with antiretroviral drugs effectively prevents progression to AIDS and other complications. Lifelong antiretroviral treatment is indicated for all people with HIV, and the treatment remarkably improves their health and possibility of survival. Moreover, infected people who achieve sustained viral suppression to an undetectable level with treatment will not transmit the virus through sex, i.e. Undetectable = Untransmittable (U=U).

"Members of the public with a history of unsafe sex should take an HIV antibody test early. Key populations with a higher risk of infection should undergo regular HIV screening, while people who had sex but do not belong to these key populations should consider getting tested at least once. They can visit the AIDS Hotline website or call the AIDS Hotline (2780 2211) for a free, anonymous and confidential HIV antibody test. HIV-positive people should seek specialist care and HIV treatment as soon as possible."

The public may visit the following pages for more information on HIV/AIDS: the Virtual AIDS Office ([www.aids.gov.hk](http://www.aids.gov.hk)), the Red Ribbon Centre ([www.rrc.gov.hk](http://www.rrc.gov.hk)), the AIDS Hotline website ([www.27802211.com](http://www.27802211.com)) and the Gay Men HIV Information website ([www.21171069.gov.hk](http://www.21171069.gov.hk)).

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## **SLW leads delegation to visit Guangzhou, Zhaoqing and Foshan**

The Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Mr Chris Sun, will lead a delegation of the Labour and Welfare Bureau tomorrow morning (August 30) to visit three cities in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, namely Guangzhou, Zhaoqing and Foshan, together with a delegation of the Legislative Council Panel on Welfare Services.

The delegations will call on the Department of Civil Affairs of Guangdong Province and visit residential care homes for the elderly. The delegations will also tour community care service units for the elderly and meet with retired Hong Kong people on the Mainland.

Mr Sun will return to Hong Kong on the evening of September 1. In his absence, the Under Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Mr Ho Kai-ming, will be the Acting Secretary for Labour and Welfare.