

Public hospitals daily update on COVID-19 cases

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

As at 9am today (November 17), 14 COVID-19 confirmed patients were discharged from hospital in the last 24 hours. So far, a total of 5 212 patients with confirmed or probable infection have been discharged.

At present, there are 594 negative pressure rooms in public hospitals with 1 077 negative pressure beds activated. A total of 117 confirmed patients are currently hospitalised in 19 public hospitals, among which seven patients are in critical condition, two are in serious condition and the remaining 108 patients are in stable condition.

The Hospital Authority will maintain close contact with the Centre for Health Protection to monitor the latest developments and to inform the public and healthcare workers on the latest information in a timely manner.

Details of the above-mentioned patients are as follows:

Patient condition	Case numbers
Discharged	5333, 5342, 5347, 5349, 5362, 5365, 5375, 5416, 5417, 5418, 5420, 5429, 5442, 5467
Critical	1989, 3496, 4706, 4833, 5110, 5185, 5409
Serious	5151, 5273

CSSA caseload for October 2020

The overall Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) caseload in October showed a drop of 872 cases, representing a decrease of 0.4 per cent compared with that of September, according to the latest CSSA caseload statistics released by the Social Welfare Department today (November 17).

The total CSSA caseload at the end of October stood at 225 086 (see attached table), with a total of 319 279 recipients.

Analysed by case nature, low-earnings cases registered a month-to-month decrease of 1.5 per cent to 2 600 cases. Old age cases were down by 0.6 per cent to 131 640 cases. Single parent cases fell by 0.3 per cent to 24 691 cases.

Unemployment cases, despite an increase of about 54.8 per cent in comparison with the level in October 2019, stabilised at 19 016 cases and the number was more or less the same as that in September 2020. The number of applications of unemployment cases decreased by 26.0 per cent to 860 cases in October 2020. The figure was the lowest since March 2020.

Ill-health cases rose by 0.3 per cent to 25 745 cases. Permanent disability cases increased by 0.1 per cent to 17 358 cases.

25th Executives' Meeting of East Asia-Pacific Central Banks Governors' Meeting (Part II) held

The following is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority:

The second session (see Note 1) of the 25th Executives' Meeting of East Asia-Pacific Central Banks (EMEAP) (see Note 2) Governors' Meeting was held via video conference yesterday (November 16) and was participated by Governors of the eleven EMEAP member central banks (Governors), as well as senior representatives from the International Monetary Fund and the Bank for International Settlements. The meeting was hosted by the Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority, Mr Eddie Yue, as this year's Chair of EMEAP Governors' Meetings.

Governors exchanged views on the regional economic outlook and long term implications of the COVID-19 pandemic. Governors concurred that the economic and financial market impact of the pandemic has brought substantial challenges to policymakers. In this unusual environment, EMEAP has played a critical role in identifying prevailing and potential risks and vulnerabilities, as well as the necessary longer-term structural changes to be implemented in the regional economies. The Meeting also exchanged views on how policymakers should calibrate the policy measures, and support regional economies by facilitating the necessary economic restructuring through measures that seek to allocate resources in an efficient and effective manner. Governors also shared experiences of their own journeys towards greater digitalisation, including practical ways to enhance their capabilities to harness technology in modern day central banking.

EMEAP member central banks have been in close collaboration throughout the financial market stresses this year. Governors reaffirmed the importance of EMEAP as an effective platform for continuous policy dialogues, strengthening regional co-operation, and providing a regional perspective that informs and facilitates discussions at global forums during this current challenging time. EMEAP will continue to play an active role in promoting

regional co-operation among central banking institutions to maintain financial stability and support economic recovery.

Governors also welcomed updates by the Monetary and Financial Stability Committee on its market surveillance and research activities, including initiatives in big data and sustainable finance.

Governors welcomed the Reserve Bank of Australia's offer to host the 26th EMEAP Governors' Meeting in 2021.

Note 1: The first session was held on August 19 via video conference.

Note 2: EMEAP is a co-operative forum of eleven central banks and monetary authorities in the East Asia and Pacific region: Reserve Bank of Australia, People's Bank of China, Hong Kong Monetary Authority, Bank Indonesia, Bank of Japan, Bank of Korea, Bank Negara Malaysia, Reserve Bank of New Zealand, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, Monetary Authority of Singapore and Bank of Thailand.

Unemployment and underemployment statistics for August – October 2020

According to the latest labour force statistics (i.e. provisional figures for August – October 2020) released today (November 17) by the Census and Statistics Department (C&SD), the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate stood at 6.4% in August – October 2020, same as that in July – September 2020. The underemployment rate also remained unchanged at 3.8% in the two periods.

Comparing August – October 2020 with July – September 2020, movements in the unemployment rate (not seasonally adjusted) in different industry sectors varied. A relatively notable decrease was observed in the retail, accommodation and food services sector, while an increase was mainly seen in the transportation sector. As to the underemployment rate, a decrease was mainly seen in the education sector, while an increase was mainly observed in the transportation sector.

Total employment increased by around 2 900 from 3 624 800 in July – September 2020 to 3 627 700 in August – October 2020. The labour force in August – October 2020 was 3 885 500, about the same as that in July – September 2020 (3 884 600).

The number of unemployed persons (not seasonally adjusted) decreased by around 2 000 from 259 800 in July – September 2020 to 257 800 in August – October 2020. Over the same period, the number of underemployed persons also

decreased by around 1 100 from 149 100 to 148 000.

Commentary

Commenting on the latest unemployment figures, the Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Dr Law Chi-kwong said, "Labour market conditions remained difficult, but showed further signs of stabilisation as the local epidemic situation stayed contained during that period. The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate remained at 6.4% in August – October 2020, unchanged from July – September 2020. The underemployment rate also remained unchanged at 3.8%. Total employment saw a slightly narrowed decline of 5.6% on a year-on-year comparison, and turned to a marginal increase of 0.1% over the preceding three-month period.

"Analysed by sector, the unemployment rate of the consumption- and tourism-related sectors (viz. retail, accommodation and food services sectors) combined declined by 0.5 percentage point from July – September 2020 to 11.2% in August – October 2020. Among these sectors, the unemployment rate for food and beverage service activities eased to 14.8%. On the other hand, the unemployment rate of the transportation sector surged by 0.6 percentage point to 6.2%, the highest in close to 17 years. The unemployment rates in other sectors showed diverse movements."

Looking ahead, Dr Law said, "While the overall economic situation saw some improvement in recent months, hiring sentiments among employers would probably remain cautious, especially when the economic outlook is still clouded by the evolving pandemic situation. The labour market will remain under pressure in the near term. The Government has already rolled out relief measures of unprecedented scale, including a host of measures to create and stabilise employment. The Government will continue to monitor the situation closely."

He noted that the Labour Department (LD) has all along provided comprehensive and free employment services through its job centres, industry-based recruitment centres and on-line platforms etc, to offer employment support for job-seekers. All job centres provide personalised employment advisory services. Employment officers will provide job-seekers with job search advice and information on the job market and training/retraining courses, conduct career aptitude assessment, etc in accordance with their individual needs and preferences, and match them with suitable jobs.

On large-scale job fairs, the LD will organise the New Graduates-New Opportunities Scheme Job Expo on December 9 and 10 at the Southorn Stadium, and around 40 employers will participate. District-based job fairs in the LD's job centres and recruitment activities in industry-based recruitment centres are also being held.

Further information

The unemployment and underemployment statistics were compiled from the findings of the continuous General Household Survey.

The survey for August – October 2020 covered a sample of some 26 000 households or 74 000 persons, selected in accordance with a scientifically designed sampling scheme to represent the population of Hong Kong. Labour force statistics compiled from this sample represented the situation in the moving three-month period of August to October 2020.

Data on labour force characteristics were obtained from the survey by interviewing each member aged 15 or over in the sampled households.

In the survey, the definitions used in measuring unemployment and underemployment follow closely those recommended by the International Labour Organization.

Statistical tables on the latest labour force statistics can be downloaded free of charge at the website of the C&SD (www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp200.jsp?productCode=D5250021). More detailed analysis of the labour force characteristics is given in the "Quarterly Report on General Household Survey" which is published four times a year. The latest issue of the publication contains statistics for the quarter April – June 2020 while the next issue covering the quarter July – September 2020 will be available by end November 2020. Users can also download this publication free of charge at the website of the C&SD (www.censtatd.gov.hk/hkstat/sub/sp200.jsp?productCode=B1050001).

For enquiries about labour force statistics, please contact the Household Statistics Analysis Section of the C&SD (Tel: 2887 5508 or email: ghs@censtatd.gov.hk).

Fraudulent website related to China CITIC Bank International Limited

The following is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority:

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) wishes to alert members of the public to a press release issued by China CITIC Bank International Limited on fraudulent website, which has been reported to the HKMA. Hyperlink to the press release is available on the [HKMA website](#) for ease of reference by members of the public.

Anyone who has provided his or her personal information to the website concerned or has conducted any financial transactions through the website should contact the bank concerned using the contact information provided in the press release, and report to the Police or contact the Cyber Security and Technology Crime Bureau of the Hong Kong Police Force at 2860 5012.