

# Blood donation precautionary measures in response to novel coronavirus infection

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The Hong Kong Red Cross Blood Transfusion Service (BTS) has established a policy to help ensure blood safety. BTS continually reviews blood donation arrangements for donors who have returned from areas with potential risks of infectious diseases. In response to the situation in relation to the novel coronavirus infection, the spokesperson for BTS today (February 4) announced the following precautionary measures to be implemented with immediate effect:

- \* Members of the public who have recently visited the Mainland should be deferred from blood donations for 28 days from their date of departure;
- \* Members of the public who have had close contact with a confirmed case of novel coronavirus infection while that patient was symptomatic should be deferred from blood donations for 28 days; and
- \* Members of the public with a confirmed novel coronavirus infection will be deferred from blood donations for 180 days after their complete recovery.

The spokesperson said that having considered the situation cautiously, while balancing the risk of blood safety, the Hospital Authority (BTS) Expert Panel on Blood and Blood Products Safety revised the arrangement. The expert panel remains vigilant and works closely with relevant departments to monitor the latest developments and enact timely reviews of related measures. Meanwhile, all blood donors are reminded that if they develop symptoms such as fever, respiratory tract infection or pneumonia after their blood donation, they should seek medical advice and inform the BTS healthcare staff as soon as possible (during office hours: 2710 1201/ 2710 1243/2710 1298; outside office hours: 2710 1210/2710 1234).