

CE visits healthcare workers at Tuen Mun Hospital (with photos)

The Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, this morning (January 1) visited Tuen Mun Hospital to learn about various measures that the Hospital Authority (HA) had put in place during the winter surge of influenza and extend New Year greetings to the healthcare workers and patients.

Accompanied by the Secretary for Food and Health, Professor Sophia Chan; the Chairman of the HA, Professor John Leong and the Chief Executive of the HA, Dr Leung Pak-yin, Mrs Lam visited the Accident and Emergency (A&E) Department, the Medicine and Geriatrics ward and the Paediatrics and Adolescent Medicine ward to listen to briefings by the healthcare workers on the operation of the A&E Department and the wards, including the waiting time of patients in the A&E Department and that for in-patient admission via the A&E Department, manpower deployment and measures implemented in response to the surge in demand for services. She also chatted with the patients to know their situation and listened to their views.

"I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to frontline healthcare workers for their dedication and professionalism in providing quality service to patients, safeguarding people's health. In response to the upsurge in service demand in the last winter, I announced in January last year to allocate an additional fund of \$500 million for the Hospital Authority to implement various relief measures. I know that some of the effective measures have continued to be implemented before the arrival of the winter influenza season this year. The Food and Health Bureau will closely monitor the situation to ensure robust public healthcare services are in place.

"Quality and reliable healthcare services are the rightful aspiration of members of the public. In the Policy Address announced in October last year, I said the Government will continue to improve the healthcare system and services, plan ahead for medical hardware facilities and manpower requirements of healthcare professionals, increase the number of healthcare training places and enhance district-based primary healthcare services to alleviate the pressure on public hospitals in the long-run.

"Prevention is better than cure. Receipt of seasonal influenza vaccination (SIV) is an effective preventive measure. The Government has adopted a wide range of measures to enhance SIV uptake rate, including the implementation of a pilot programme to roll out free outreach seasonal influenza vaccination services for primary students at schools, increase in the subsidy under the Vaccination Subsidy Scheme and expansion of eligible groups to cover people aged between 50 and 64. With these initiatives, I am pleased to note as at December 23 last year, more than 960 000 doses of influenza vaccine have been administered, representing an increase of 56 per cent compared with the same period last year in which over 610 000 doses were administered. I also received vaccination earlier. I appeal to members of the public to receive the vaccination as early as possible to protect themselves

and the others, reducing the risk of hospitalisation."

