

## CE welcomes arrival of Mainland nucleic acid test support team (with photos/videos)

The Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, today (August 28) attended a ceremony to welcome the arrival of the Mainland nucleic acid test support team at Sun Yat Sen Memorial Park Sports Centre in Central and Western District, and inspected the temporary air-inflated laboratories that are ready for commissioning in the Sports Centre.

Addressing the ceremony, Mrs Lam expressed her heartfelt gratitude to the Central Government for its positive response to the request of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) by establishing speedily a support team and providing necessary equipment and resources to enhance the testing capability of Hong Kong in a short period of time, enabling the HKSAR Government to launch the large-scale Universal Community Testing Programme (UCTP ) to provide voluntary virus testing for all citizens. She thanked each member of the support team on behalf of the Hong Kong people.

"Since Hong Kong was presented with a new wave of the COVID-19 epidemic comprising mainly local cases in early July, the Central Government has attached great importance to the epidemic situation of Hong Kong. It cares about the safety and health of the Hong Kong people and has given a clear and positive response to the specific requests made by the HKSAR Government," Mrs Lam said.

Mrs Lam extended her warm welcome to the chief leader of the support team and Deputy Director of the Medical Administration Bureau of the National Health Commission (NHC), Mr Li Dachuan, who led more than 160 support team members to Hong Kong this morning. The members primarily came from the NHC and Guangdong, and over 10 of them are from Fujian and Guangxi. Together with the 10 members of the advance party and the leader of the support team (Guangdong), Mr Yu Dewen, who arrived early this month, and the 50 members who arrived last week, more than 220 members of the support team are currently in Hong Kong to make preparations for the launch of the large-scale UCTP next Tuesday (September 1). To Mrs Lam's understanding, the NHC will co-ordinate the arrival of a total of about 600 members of the support team to provide services in Hong Kong subject to the actual need.

"The social environment of Hong Kong is different from that of the Mainland, and we did not conduct large-scale virus testing for asymptomatic persons during the fight against the disease in the past few months. I am very grateful to the advance party of the support team for their valuable advice on the UCTP. I am deeply impressed by their professionalism and the great importance they attach to the Programme," Mrs Lam said.

Mrs Lam and the other officials then inspected the temporary air-inflated laboratories to learn about the facilities, the testing procedures

and the workflow. A total of 16 laboratories have been set up in Sun Yat Sen Memorial Park Sports Centre. Sunrise Diagnostic Centre Limited, a joint venture with BGI set up in Hong Kong, is working with the support team in the setting up and operation of the laboratories. Mrs Lam said she was pleased to note that the laboratories, following some two weeks of preparation, are now ready to support large-scale testing.

"Although the epidemic has eased recently compared to the situation earlier, it has yet to be stabilised. There are still a certain number of confirmed cases every day and a proportion of them are cases with unknown sources of infection, suggesting that there are still silent transmission chains in the community. The UCTP can help us to identify asymptomatic patients and further curb the epidemic, thereby enabling the resumption of normal social lives and economic activities long awaited by the public as soon as possible. The testing is safe, convenient and speedy with full protection of privacy. I appeal to everyone to participate," Mrs Lam said.

The UCTP will be open to the public to sign up and make appointments for testing from tomorrow (August 29). Details are available at [www.communitytest.gov.hk](http://www.communitytest.gov.hk).

