

# Chinese medicine services option to be offered to inpatients in Community Treatment Facility

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The Hospital Authority (HA) announced today (January 25) that an option of Chinese medicine (CM) services will be offered to COVID-19 patients staying in the Community Treatment Facility (CTF) at AsiaWorld-Expo from tomorrow (January 26).

The HA is commencing the Special Chinese Medicine Programme for COVID-19 In-patients to provide free CM general consultation to COVID-19 patients receiving treatment at the CTF through the tripartite Chinese Medicine Clinic cum Training and Research Centres (CMCTRs). The Programme aims to provide another treatment option to patients for relieving symptoms.

"Patient enrolment is on voluntary basis. The services will be arranged for eligible persons aged 18 or above who are suitable to be treated with CM after being clinically assessed by a Western medicine (WM) doctor and a Chinese medicine practitioner (CMP)," the HA spokesperson said.

An Expert Panel was formed to develop the clinical protocol for this Programme. Members included CM experts in clinical areas and Chinese medicines from three local universities, together with medicine, infectious disease and toxicology experts of the WM side from the HA and more.

With reference to the current arrangements and operation of WM in the CTF, CMPs will be providing services on-site in non-isolation areas via video with the application of the latest technology. The relevant arrangements also conform to the clinical operation mode and infection control measures of the site. CMPs would follow clinical guidelines outlined in the protocol developed by the Expert Panel to prescribe CM medication. After first consultation, CMPs will arrange follow-up consultation and treatment based on clinical needs.

The HA has all along been supporting the Government on epidemic control including consideration of the role of CMPs in combating COVID-19. The experience gained from the Chinese Medicine Out-patient Programme for Discharged COVID-19 Patients (Out-patient Programme) offering rehabilitation service launched in April 2020 together with the commencement of inpatient service in the CTF would help evaluate the clinical outcome of treating patients under an integrated Chinese-Western medicine model.

Besides the new service in the CTF, eligible persons who have been discharged from public hospitals after COVID-19 treatment can enrol in the Out-patient Programme and receive CM services 10 times for free in 11

participating CMCTRs. Currently, over 700 discharged patients have joined the Out-patient Programme.