

# CS inspects Penny's Bay Quarantine Centre

The Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Matthew Cheung Kin-chung, inspected Penny's Bay Quarantine Centre on Lantau Island this evening (December 29) to learn about its latest operations.

Accompanied by the Director of Architectural Services, Ms Winnie Ho; the Chief Staff Officer of the Civil Aid Service (CAS), Mr Francis Fong; and the Department of Health (DH)'s Consultant (Family Medicine) in charge, Dr Cecilia Fan, Mr Cheung was briefed by CAS members and DH staff on the daily operation of the centre and the transfer arrangement for persons under quarantine. The daily operation of quarantine centres is managed by the CAS and the DH is responsible for the medical services at the medical post on-site.

Mr Cheung thanked in particular the CAS members and the DH staff for their dedication and effort in providing the necessary supplies and appropriate support to the persons subject to quarantine. He appealed to colleagues of relevant government departments to enhance communication and stay alert to the situation with a view to ensuring the smooth operation of the centre.

Mr Cheung noted that the Architectural Services Department immediately arranged a contractor to conduct urgent clearing of trash found in manhole after sewer blockage was reported last night. He expressed appreciation to colleagues of the department and contractors for working together in successfully increasing the number of quarantine units in Hong Kong within the shortest period of time.

Mr Cheung pointed out that quarantine and isolation of close contacts and persons with infection risks plays a vital role in the containment of the epidemic. The severe epidemic situation at present could place certain pressure on the demand for quarantine facilities. The Government will closely monitor the use of various quarantine facilities and make timely adjustments.

Constructed in four phases, the Penny's Bay Quarantine Centre is now fully in use and provides a total of 3 500 units. Together with the Junior Police Call Permanent Activity Centre at Pat Heung, the Lei Yue Mun Park and Holiday Village and the Sai Kung Outdoor Recreation Centre, about 4 150 units in total are available in the quarantine centres across the territory. In addition, the Government has arranged for four hotels, namely Silka Tsuen Wan, Dorsett Kwun Tong, Silka Seaview in Yau Ma Tei and the Rambler Garden Hotel in Tsing Yi, to operate as designated quarantine hotels for close contacts of COVID-19 confirmed cases, altogether providing more than 1 700 rooms. In total, there are currently nearly 6 000 quarantine units to cope with the demand stemming from the epidemic.

As at 11am today, the usage rate of various quarantine facilities across the territory was about 30 per cent (about 1 700 units) and over 3 200 units are ready to be used (the remaining units are under maintenance or disinfection), reflecting that the facilities are still sufficient.

The DH's Quarantine Centre Task Force has all along been proactively following up on the arrangement of transferring close contacts to quarantine centres for mandatory quarantine. The Task Force has deployed additional manpower, with the number of staff members increased from 31 to 54, and will further increase the figure to almost 70 in the future, with a view to getting in touch with the close contacts concerned within 24 hours after a quarantine order is issued and arranging for designated vehicles to transfer them to quarantine centres for quarantine.

Mr Cheung reiterated that the Government attaches great importance to the quarantine arrangements for close contacts, and the DH will continue to work closely with related government departments to ensure the smooth transfer of close contacts to quarantine centres.

During the inspection, Mr Cheung also thanked officers of the Hong Kong Police Force and the Fire Services Department stationing on-site for standing fast at their posts in keeping the centre safe and responding to unforeseen incidents.