

[DH and HKSTP sign MOU to drive digital transformation in public health \(with photos\)](#)

The Department of Health (DH) and the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation (HKSTP) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) today (August 18) which aims at leveraging the latest innovation and technology (I&T) to expedite digitalisation for public health functions while fostering an innovation-driven culture in the healthcare sector. This strategic partnership is conducive to better equipping the DH for the ever-evolving public health challenges, and also supports the smart government strategy.

Under the MOU, the DH and the HKSTP will, over the next three years, jointly explore innovative solutions across four key areas of the DH's public health functions, namely (i) health regulatory affairs; (ii) health protection and health promotion; (iii) health administration; and (iv) dental and clinical services.

This collaborative effort will primarily focus on six crucial public health application areas, including (i) smart health regulatory functions; (ii) smart clinics; (iii) smart workflow re-engineering; (iv) smart customer services; (v) online engagement; and (vi) data collaboration.

By identifying suitable innovative solutions for the DH, tech ventures can also test their tailor-made solutions in real-life operating environments.

Witnessed by the Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry, Professor Sun Dong; the Director of Health, Dr Ronald Lam; and the Chairman of the HKSTP, Dr Sunny Chai, the MOU was signed by the Head, Health Informatics and Technology Office of the DH, Dr Liza To, and the Chief Executive Officer of the HKSTP, Mr Albert Wong.

Speaking at the ceremony, Professor Sun said that the Government has been adopting a multipronged approach to encourage various departments, and public and private organisations in expediting implementation of digital economy and smart city initiatives in different areas. As the Government's adviser on health matters, the DH has been actively responding to the general direction of implementing smart government initiatives and making good use of data. He believed that this collaboration between the DH and the HKSTPC, coupled with the application of technologies such as artificial intelligence, the Internet of Things and big data analysis, which have been developing rapidly in Hong Kong in recent years, will bring a new impetus to Hong Kong's public health services and benefit the public at large. This will also inspire more I&T companies to work with government departments to develop appropriate digitalisation or intelligence solutions for different public

services.

Dr Lam, remarked in his opening speech that the DH, being the Government's health advisor and agency to execute health policies and statutory functions, has long been providing unwavering support in promoting the application of I&T in public health. Driven by the imperatives brought by the COVID-19 pandemic, the DH recognises the pivotal role of I&T in effectively addressing evolving public health challenges. These challenges encompass not only new and known communicable diseases, but also the risk factors and life-styles related to non-communicable diseases, health regulatory aspects, and more. Dr Lam encouraged all healthcare professionals to embrace I&T and cultivate an environment of continuous innovation within the department. In the coming years, the DH will continue to collaborate with the industry and academia to create a vibrant public health ecosystem that fosters I&T, achieving a mutually beneficial outcome.

Dr Chai, expressed his enthusiasm for the partnership and said, "Our alliance with the DH marks an exciting chapter in improving public services. Leveraging our broad network of proven innovative solutions, we aim to enhance public health services through the integration of I&T. We are eager to extend our collaboration with additional government departments, offering HKSTP companies the chance to pilot innovative concepts and thereby infuse public services with a new wave of technological momentum. This aligns with our commitment to contribute to the evolution of a smarter Hong Kong."

This landmark collaboration marks a significant milestone in the journey toward digital transformation in public health. The DH and the HKSTP are poised to drive innovation and contribute to building a healthy Hong Kong.



