

DH publishes Hong Kong Chinese Materia Medica Standards Volume 11

The Department of Health (DH) today (December 30) published the safety and quality standards for 14 commonly used Chinese Materia Medica (CMM) in Volume 11 of the Hong Kong Chinese Materia Medica Standards (HKCMMS) for public reference.

"In 2002, the DH launched the HKCMMS project to gradually establish reference standards for CMM commonly used in Hong Kong to ensure the safety and quality of CMM. The compilation of these standards facilitates research in Chinese medicines, promotes the modernisation and internationalisation of the Chinese medicine industry in the city, and further enhances international trade in Chinese medicine. After more than 20 years of development, the HKCMMS are now applied in different fields and have been cited in numerous articles on Chinese medicine research by overseas authoritative institutions and in international journals," a DH spokesman said.

The spokesman added that the HKCMMS sets out the names, sources, descriptions of the CMM, as well as methods of identification (including microscopic identification, thin-layer chromatographic identification, gas and high-performance/ultra high-performance liquid chromatographic fingerprinting), tests, extractives and assays. This volume is the 11th of the series, which covers an addition of reference standards for 14 CMM, namely Caryophylli Flos, Changii Radix, Galangae Fructus, Hippophae Fructus, Lycii Fructus, Menthae Haplocalycis Herba, Myrrha, Perillae Folium, Pogostemonis Herba, Poria, Sauropi Folium, Stellariae Radix, Storax and Ziziphi Spinosae Semen, bringing the total to 344.

The criteria for selecting the CMMs for research include the following:

- * common usage in the local community;
- * international concern in respect of their safety and quality;
- * high economic value in the local market; and
- * priority being accorded to the CMMs listed in Schedule 1 and Schedule 2 of the Chinese Medicine Ordinance.

The research for HKCMMS Volume 11 was conducted by universities and research institutions from Hong Kong, Mainland China, and Taiwan. An International Advisory Board comprising local, Mainland and overseas experts also advised on the research principles, methodologies, parameters and analytical methods of the HKCMMS. The Government Laboratory developed analytical methods for determining heavy metals, pesticide residues and mycotoxins, and participated in interlaboratory verification. In addition, the National Medical Products Administration, the National Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine and the Chinese Pharmacopoeia Commission provided valuable advice and support to the HKCMMS project.

The DH will arrange briefing sessions for the Chinese medicines trade as

well as representatives of laboratories to update them on HKCMMS Volume 11 and the latest research developments of the HKCMMS project.

All Volumes of the HKCMMS are now available for public access at www.cmro.gov.hk/html/eng/useful_information/hkcmms/volumes.html.