

DH to accept applications for day procedure centre licences under Private Healthcare Facilities Ordinance starting today

The Department of Health (DH) today (January 2) reminded operators of day procedure centre (DPC) that applications for DPC licences under the Private Healthcare Facilities Ordinance (Cap. 633) will be accepted starting from today. The Director of Health has already issued the Code of Practice for Day Procedure Centres, which will take effect on the same date.

Under the Ordinance, DPC refers to an ambulatory facility that is used for carrying out scheduled medical procedures as listed in Column 2 of [Schedule 3](#) to the Ordinance on patients without lodging. Operators of DPCs must apply for DPC licences, and there are no exemption arrangements for DPCs.

For DPCs in operation on or before November 30, 2018, if applications for licences are submitted from today till April 30 (both dates inclusive), provisional licences may be issued subject to assessment by the DH. DPCs issued with provisional licences might continue to operate legally until the application for the licence is approved, withdrawn or rejected, or the Secretary for Food and Health appoints by notice published in the Gazette the date on which the transitional arrangement expires. As for DPCs in operation after November 30, 2018, the licence application period also starts today.

A spokesman for the DH said, "The DH will issue letters to all medical practitioners and dentists in Hong Kong to remind them of the requirements and the application procedures, so as to help them prepare to make the necessary arrangements. The first batch of DPC licences issued under the Ordinance is expected to take effect on January 1, 2021."

The Ordinance was enacted on November 30, 2018, aiming to further protect patient safety and rights through the introduction of a new regulatory regime for private healthcare facilities. Under the Ordinance, all premises where registered medical practitioners and/or dentists practise are required to obtain a licence or a letter of exemption, including hospitals, DPCs and clinics. The regulatory regime is being implemented in phases. Applications for hospital licences have commenced since last year. Details of applications for clinic licences and requests for letters of exemption for small practice clinics will be announced in due course.

Operators can apply for DPC licences through the online platform. For details on DPC licence applications, please visit the website of the DH's Office for Regulation of Private Healthcare Facilities (www.orphf.gov.hk).