

# DH's Women Health Centres to be integrated into Primary Healthcare Commission and Central and Western District Health Centre to be established

The Health Bureau (HNB) announced today (January 23) that woman health services under the Department of Health (DH) will be integrated into the district health network, to be named as Women Wellness Satellites (WWS), of the Primary Healthcare Commission (PHC Commission) of the HNB, forming a network with District Health Centres (DHC)/DHC Expresses (DHCEs) in all 18 districts across Hong Kong to provide eligible women with prevention-based and more personalised primary healthcare services. Upon open tendering, the HNB awarded a three-year operation service contract for the three WWSs and the Central and Western (C&W) DHC to the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals (the operator). The three WWSs and C&W DHC are expected to commence operation within this year.

In the 2024 Policy Address, the Chief Executive put forward the initiatives of integrating Woman Health Centres' services and upgrading more interim DHCEs to DHCs, along with the extension of a multidisciplinary service network. The Primary Healthcare Blueprint also recommended gradually integrating the primary healthcare services under the DH into the district-based community healthcare system. The establishment of WWSs and the upgrading of C&W DHC Express to DHC aim to implement the relevant policy directions for strengthening the prevention-oriented, district-based, and family-centric primary healthcare network.

Strengthening women's health services, promotion and education work in DHCs

Integration of the DH's existing women's health services into the district health network will be conducive to shortening the waiting time for services, reducing duplication of healthcare services and promoting primary healthcare development. The PHC Commission will commence the integrated women's health services within this year in an orderly manner. DHCs/DHCEs across all 18 districts will enhance promotion and education related to women's health, as well as provide new dedicated nurse clinics for women's health services to encourage citizens to manage their own health. DHCs/DHCEs will also identify women in need through basic health assessments and individual consultations, and refer them to WWSs or the General Out-patient Clinics (GOPCs) of the Hospital Authority (HA) to receive women's health services as appropriate.

Personalised and value-added women's health services

The formation of the service network will enhance accessibility to women's health services. The HA will start to provide preventive care services to the underprivileged, whereas WWSs will focus on addressing specific health needs of women by providing more personalised and value-added primary healthcare services. In addition to the existing services such as health assessments, breast cancer and cervical cancer screenings, WWSs will devise personalised preventive care or specific consultation services according to individual health risks and needs for members' selection. WWSs will also explore introducing self-sampling for Human Papillomavirus (HPV) testing to enhance prevention-oriented women's health services. Furthermore, to promote the "Family Doctor for All" concept, WWSs will explore collaboration with family doctors participating in the Chronic Disease Co-Care Pilot Scheme to support and strengthen comprehensive health management and screening services for women. Details will be announced later.

The three WWSs will be located in Chai Wan, Lam Tin, and Tuen Mun (see Annex). The Chai Wan WWS is expected to start service in June at the earliest, while the Lam Tin and Tuen Mun WWSs are expected to commence operation in September at the earliest. Starting from tomorrow (January 24), DHCs/DHCEs across all 18 districts will accept registration from women aged 64 or below and provide basic women's health services, conduct initial assessments and arrange referrals to WWSs for scheduling of services as necessary. Women who would like to receive services at WWSs must first register as members at DHCs/DHCEs.

During the transition period of service integration, the three Woman Health Centres (namely the Chai Wan Woman Health Centre, Lam Tin Woman Health Centre, and Tuen Mun Woman Health Centre) and four designated Maternal and Child Health Centres (namely the Ap Lei Chau Maternal and Child Health Centre, Yaumatei Maternal and Child Health Centre, Fanling Maternal and Child Health Centre, and Ma On Shan Maternal and Child Health Centre) under the DH will cease accepting new appointments for women's health services starting from tomorrow (January 24). Those who have already made appointments or have paid their annual fee and are still within the service period will continue to receive relevant services from the DH. Details on the relevant transition arrangements are available on the website of the Family Health Services of the DH ([www.fhs.gov.hk/english/main\\_ser/woman\\_health.html](http://www.fhs.gov.hk/english/main_ser/woman_health.html)).

To encourage citizens to take primary responsibility for managing their own health, WWS services will adopt a co-payment model, where eligible individuals will receive partial subsidy from the Government and also be required to pay a designated co-payment fee. The co-payment fee for standard services will be similar to the current charges of the Woman Health Centres of the DH, with details to be announced later. Members of the public may also visit the DHC website ([www.dhc.gov.hk/en/](http://www.dhc.gov.hk/en/)) for the latest information.

#### Catering for underprivileged women

Meanwhile, GOPCs of the HA will provide new preventive women's health services with a view to focusing on caring for the underprivileged. Starting from tomorrow (January 24), eligible persons (including Comprehensive Social

Security Assistance recipients or individuals granted medical fee waivers) will be arranged through DHCs/DHCEs to receive women preventive care and health promotion services, which are the same as those in the district health network, at selected GOPCs of the HA.

#### Expansion of C&W DHC Express to DHC

Apart from women's health services, the operator is required to set up a DHC core centre and a satellite centre in the C&W district within the first year of operation. The core centre of the C&W DHC will be located at 308 Des Voeux Road Central with a total floor area of about 1 000 square metres, and is expected to commence service in the third quarter. The PHC Commission will discuss with the operator and implement a transitional arrangement for upgrading the C&W DHC Express to a DHC to ensure a smooth transition of services.