

DoH leads delegation to visit Singapore and sign MOU on prevention and control of communicable diseases (with photos)

At the invitation of the Ministry of Health of Singapore, the Director of Health, Dr Ronald Lam, led a delegation from the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) to Singapore and started a three-day visit on August 22. During the visit, the CHP of the DH signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on the prevention and control of communicable diseases with the interim Communicable Diseases Agency (iCDA) of Singapore. The delegation conducted work exchanges with the Ministry of Health of Singapore, and also visited National Centre for Infectious Diseases, National Environment Agency and Health Promotion Board to reinforce mutual ties and strengthen exchanges and co-operation on public health between the two places.

Dr Lam led the delegation and visited the iCDA on August 22. The Controller of the CHP of the DH, Dr Edwin Tsui, signed an MOU with the Executive Director of the iCDA, Professor Vernon Lee. The MOU aims to enhance co-operation between both sides in communicable diseases prevention, monitoring, epidemiological investigation, and response to infectious diseases with significant public health impacts, as well as in combating antimicrobial resistance actions, research and development, manpower capacity building and training, as well as exchange views on public health emergency response plans and exercises.

The MOU provides a solid foundation for the co-operation between Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) and Singapore. It signifies the strengthened working partnership between the CHP of the DH and international counterparts in the areas of diseases prevention and control, which includes further enhancing communicable diseases information exchanges and experience sharing within the regions.

The DH has long been contributing to global health via various initiatives, including the CHP's Public Health Laboratory Services Branch serving as a designated Reference Laboratory of the World Health Organization to provide confirmatory service and technology transfer.

Speaking at the MOU signing ceremony, Dr Lam said that it marked a significant milestone to formalise partnership between the HKSAR and Singapore through the signing of this MOU. The overarching goal of this MOU is to facilitate and enhance collaboration in areas of mutual interest concerning communicable diseases.

"We eagerly anticipate further synergising our efforts and sharing our

best practices to bolster public health protection," Dr Lam said.

On the same day, Dr Lam visited the National Centre for Infectious Diseases, toured the High Level Isolation Unit and had a discussion with the National Public Health Laboratory, to learn more about isolation facilities and laboratory surveillance in Singapore. Dr Lam then had a meeting with the Ministry of Health to gain a better understanding of strategies on non-communicable diseases prevention in Singapore including tobacco control and cancer screening.

Dr Lam visited the National Environment Agency and toured around its laboratory to discuss the prevention and control of mosquito-borne diseases strategies yesterday (August 23). They then visited the Health Promotion Board to discuss strategies and experiences in health promotion, including cross sector collaborations and harnessing information and technology to support health promotion efforts.

The Head of the Emergency Response and Programme Management Branch of the DH, Dr Albert Au, and the Head of the Health Promotion Branch of the DH, Dr Leung Yiu-hong, also joined the visit. The delegation will return to Hong Kong today (August 24).



