

Extension of special visiting arrangement to 18 non-acute hospitals

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The Hospital Authority (HA) today (May 26) announced that the special visiting arrangement will be extended from eight to 18 non-acute hospitals beginning this weekend.

The special visiting arrangement will cover 10 more hospitals (see details in the Appendix). The visiting quotas will be determined with due consideration to the operation of individual wards. Family members have to schedule the visits via ward staff, who will begin contacting them in the next few days. Family members are not required to call the wards for booking themselves.

"To minimise the infection risk for inpatients and staff, one-off visitors are required to present a negative COVID-19 nucleic acid test result obtained within 72 hours before the scheduled visit. Regular visitors can choose to conduct weekly testing. In addition, visitors who have completed their two-dose COVID-19 vaccination for at least 14 days can opt for rapid antigen testing within 24 hours before the visit," the HA spokesperson said.

"The testing requirements for the special visiting arrangement was implemented in eight hospitals earlier, and the process was generally smooth. Visitors who use the COVID-19 rapid antigen test have to purchase the test kit and conduct it at home on their own. The visitors need to take a photo of the person being tested with the negative results and the time and date of the test. The photo, the packing and product insert of the rapid antigen test kit and the vaccination record need to be shown together to the ward staff for checking before entering the ward. Details are available on the HA webpage."

The spokesperson reminded visitors to scan the Hospital Visit QR code to fill in the health declaration form within 24 hours before the visit and show the QR code generated by the system to the ward staff. The Hospital Visit QR code is displayed on the HA webpage and in the mobile app "HA Go".

The HA hopes the community can understand that visiting arrangements will be made with certain restrictions under the current epidemic situation. Meanwhile, other hospitals and wards will continue to facilitate a compassionate visiting arrangement and video visiting as far as practicable.

"The COVID-19 rapid antigen test is also applicable for visits arranged on compassionate grounds or under urgent circumstances. Visitors, who cannot conduct the nucleic acid test within 72 hours before the visit, can perform rapid antigen testing within 24 hours before the visit or right after the

visit," the spokesperson added.

Visitors who come to the hospitals under urgent circumstances can buy a rapid antigen test kit at community pharmacies, hospital shops or vending machines. Hospital staff will guide visitors to designated or suitable locations in the hospitals for conducting the tests by themselves.

The spokesperson reiterated that all visitors entering public hospitals are required to comply with the infection control measures, such as wearing surgical masks, temperature checking and filling in health declaration forms. In addition, visitors are encouraged to scan the "LeaveHomeSafe" venue QR code displayed at all public hospitals for complete personal records of their visits. â€‹