

Families and schools work together to combat "space oil"

The Narcotics Division (ND) of the Security Bureau met with representatives from the Committee on Home-School Co-operation (CHSC) and the district Federations of Parent-Teacher Associations (FPTAs) yesterday (November 6) to discuss different ways to prevent the emerging drug "space oil" from harming Hong Kong's young people.

During the meeting, representatives from the FPTAs were updated on the latest situation covering the harm of "space oil", including its relationship with e-cigarettes. The ND introduced to the representatives the anti-drug preventive education and publicity (PE&P) programmes in schools, adding that it looked forward to more secondary schools participating in the Healthy School Programme with a Drug Testing Component. The representatives in attendance welcomed more anti-drug PE&P programmes targeting schools and parents to be carried out by the ND and organisations concerned to raise awareness of and vigilance against "space oil" and other drugs.

The ND also briefed attendees on the prevailing statutory control on etomidate, the main ingredient of "space oil", as well as the Government's proposed legislative amendments for stricter control on the substance. Representatives from the district FPTAs expressed support for the Government's prompt action to list etomidate as a dangerous drug under the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance (Cap. 134) to raise the maximum penalty and deterrence.

The ND urges parents to remain vigilant and pay more attention to their children. Possession of any type of alternative smoking product by children, along with unexplained bruises on their limbs, could be a sign of taking "space oil". Parents who need to seek help can send a message to 98 186 186 through the instant messaging platforms of WhatsApp and WeChat, or call the 24-hour hotline 186 186, to obtain information or seek assistance from social workers.

The ND's website (www.nd.gov.hk) contains information about "space oil", and the ND also launched a "space oil" themed animated video in August (www.youtube.com/watch?v=zHQVLgU3wAA). Members of the public are welcome to browse the website. In addition, the Hong Kong Jockey Club Drug InfoCentre, including the new "space oil" corner therein, located on the roof floor of the Low Block of the Queensway Government Offices, provides various forms of anti-drug knowledge and is open to the public.