

## Government continues to provide medical consultation to HA's chronic disease patients living in Guangdong under COVID-19 epidemic

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government announced today (October 22) that the Special Support Scheme (the Scheme) for chronic disease patients of the Hospital Authority (HA) residing in Guangdong Province will continue until May 9, 2022, and an additional RMB1,000 subsidy will be granted to each patient, enabling the patients concerned to continue receiving subsidised medical consultation at the University of Hong Kong-Shenzhen Hospital (HKU-SZH) under the COVID-19 epidemic.

Due to the compulsory quarantine measures implemented during the epidemic, some Hong Kong residents staying in Guangdong Province are unable to travel back and forth between Hong Kong and the Mainland for scheduled medical consultations at the outpatient clinics under the HA as they used to. To ensure that the health conditions of these patients can be effectively monitored and taken care of in a continued and co-ordinated manner, the Government announced the launch of the Scheme on November 10 last year and commissioned HKU-SZH to provide subsidised follow-up consultations for patients with scheduled appointments at designated Specialist Outpatient Clinics (SOPC) or General Outpatient Clinics (GOPC) under the HA. The Scheme, originally scheduled to end on July 31 this year, was extended to November 9 earlier. As of October 10, HKU-SZH has scheduled about 31 300 medical appointments for eligible patients. About 26 000 attendances have received medical consultations.

Given that the compulsory quarantine measures in both Hong Kong and the Mainland are yet to be relaxed completely, the Government will further extend the Scheme for an additional six months to May 9, 2022. Eligible persons may continue to receive medical consultations at HKU-SZH before such date, or until the lapse of the quarantine requirement in both Hong Kong and the Mainland (whichever is earlier).

According to the prevailing Scheme arrangement, eligible patients under the Scheme are required to co-pay a consultation fee of RMB100 for each visit to designated outpatient service at HKU-SZH (except for specified persons whose medical fees would be waived upon verification by the HA). The rest of the medical fees are subsidised under the Scheme subject to a cap of RMB2,000 per patient. In light of further extension of the Scheme, the Government will provide an additional RMB1,000 subsidy on top of the original RMB2,000 subsidy to eligible patients who submit a valid application for the Scheme on or before November 9, 2021, and have the application subsequently verified. The subsidy cap of these eligible patients will be increased to RMB3,000 accordingly. For those who submit a valid application on or after November

10, 2021, and have the application subsequently verified, they will be entitled to a subsidy subject to a cap of RMB1,000 for the six-month extension period.

HA patients who have their follow-up appointments at the HA's SOPC or GOPC scheduled between February 17, 2020, and May 9, 2022, may submit application to HKU-SZH along with the required supporting documents. The subsidised scope of service under the Scheme will remain unchanged, covering the majority of SOPC and GOPC services provided by the HA, namely anaesthesiology (pain clinic only); cardiothoracic surgery; clinical oncology; ear, nose and throat; eye; gynecology; medicine; neurosurgery; obstetrics; orthopaedics and traumatology; paediatrics, and surgery. Episodic illnesses, inpatient or day inpatient, and Accident and Emergency Department services are not included.

Details of the Scheme are available at the HA's website ([www.ha.org.hk/goto/sss/en](http://www.ha.org.hk/goto/sss/en)) or HKU-SZH's website ([www.hku-szh.org/en/index.html](http://www.hku-szh.org/en/index.html)). For enquiries, please call the HA (Tel: 2300 7070) between 9am and 6pm from Mondays to Fridays, excluding public holidays, or HKU-SZH (Tel: (+86) 0755-86913101) from 8am to 12.30pm and 2pm to 5.30pm from Mondays to Fridays, excluding public holidays.