

Government statement on Universal Community Testing Programme

On media reports today (August 29) that the Secretary for the Civil Service, Mr Patrick Nip, after attending a radio programme, did not respond to the question why the Government launched the Universal Community Testing Programme (UCTP) but deferred the Legislative Council Election, a spokesman for the Civil Service Bureau stressed that no arrangements had been made for Mr Nip to meet the media after the radio programme. Moreover, Mr Nip had recently responded to this question on various occasions, including the press conference on the UCTP yesterday, clearly stating that the UCTP and the election cannot be compared.

At the press conference yesterday, Mr Nip said the Chief Executive earlier had explained in details that the Special Administrative Region Government deferred the Legislative Council Election by one year to protect public safety and public health under the epidemic, and to ensure that the election is conducted openly and fairly. And in responding to media questions on the relation between the election and the UCTP, and the fight against the virus, the Government had already pointed out that the UCTP is one of the important measures in fighting the epidemic. The UCTP will be conducted between seven and 14 days, different from the election which is completed in one day. Moreover, the UCTP adopts an online booking arrangement which can effectively avoid the gathering of crowds or queues outside the community testing centres.

The UCTP is to identify asymptomatic COVID-19 patients in the community in order to cut the transmission chain. The spokesman appealed to members of the public to join the UCTP to protect oneself and others.