

HA announces enhanced clinic booking with voice input

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The Hospital Authority (HA) today (June 11) announced the introduction of a new voice input method in the general out-patient clinic (GOPC) telephone appointment system to become effective from 5pm this Saturday (June 16) to make it easier for the public to book a medical consultation service.

According to the HA spokesperson, the Authority has been soliciting and gathering public views and suggestions on the GOPC telephone appointment system with a view to continuously improving and enhancing the services. "While the system has all along been providing the key-in mode of input, the voice input method is being introduced to offer one more option to cater to the specific needs of different users, such as elders, in making telephone bookings. With the new function in place, users can complete the appointment booking by simply narrating the personal information under the instructions.

"The voice input method is able to recognise three different languages, namely Cantonese, English and Putonghua. While the original key-in mode will remain, the flow of appointment bookings of the two input methods is identical. Users are allowed to choose between the two that suit them best to make an appointment booking. They have to provide the required information under instructions through a clear voice input," the spokesperson added. Notice will be posted in the clinics to inform members of the public of the introduction of the new voice input method.

The spokesperson said that the HA has recently added 75 lines to the telephone appointment system to cope with the increasing demand for general outpatient services, thereby enhancing the accessibility of the service. Furthermore, a total of 55,000 additional consultations is also planned for the GOPC service in the current financial year (2018-19).

Launched in 2006, the GOPC telephone appointment system allows patients to make appointments at home instead of queuing for discs, thereby alleviating the problems of overcrowding and long waiting times in clinics as well as reducing the risk of cross-infection among patients. Through the system, which currently operates round-the-clock with about 800 lines, patients with episodic diseases can book, at any time of the day, consultation time slots at GOPCs during the next 24 hours.