

HA launches Glaucoma Public-Private Partnership Programme

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The Hospital Authority (HA) today (June 27) announced the launching of the Glaucoma Public-Private Partnership (PPP) Programme. This is the first HA clinical PPP Programme to provide long-term specialist care for patients. Invitation letters will be issued to eligible patients starting from tomorrow for the choice of specialist services from private ophthalmologists. It is estimated that around 2 000 patients would join the Programme in three years.

The Programme will be piloted in three clusters, namely Hong Kong West, Kowloon Central and New Territories East Clusters. Clinically stable glaucoma patients being taken care of by Eye Specialist Outpatient Clinic (SOPC) in these clusters will start to receive invitation letters for voluntary participation. Each participating patient will receive up to four subsidised consultations per year including specified glaucoma drugs. If clinically indicated, the private ophthalmologist will also provide investigation services of one Visual Field test and one Optical Coherence Tomography scan per year.

The spokesperson said that this Programme aims to offer choice to HA SOPC patients for receiving private specialist services in the community and also help the HA to manage demand for specialist services.

"Under the Programme, participating patients only need to pay the same fee as for HA SOPC services. Currently, it is \$80 per follow-up attendance, \$15 per drug item and \$80 per investigation service. Recipients of various fee waivers will continue to have the same fee-waiving arrangements as for HA services. Under mutual agreement with the private ophthalmologists, patients may receive further services and drugs at their own expenses. Those who have participated in the Elderly Health Care Voucher Scheme can pay for the additional charges from their account," the spokesperson remarked.

Patient forums will be organised to explain the programme details and encourage and facilitate patients' enrollment. Patients also have to register in the Electronic Health Record Sharing System so that their medical records can be shared between the HA and their selected private ophthalmologists for continuity of care.

Currently, more than 30 private ophthalmologists have enrolled in the Programme since invitation issued in March this year. All private ophthalmologists practising in the territory are welcome to participate at any time. Participating private ophthalmologists may receive a maximum service fee of \$5,350 per patient per year, including the fee equivalent to HA SOPC services paid by patients after each consultation.

Programme details and the latest list of participating private ophthalmologists will be posted on the designated website(www.ha.org.hk/ppp/glaucomapp). A Programme hotline (2300 6688) is also available to answer enquiries.