

Health Bureau designates operator of Greater Bay Area International Clinical Trial Institute through open tender

The Health Bureau (HHB) announced today (September 23) that, after months of preparation with full effort since the Chief Executive put forward in the Policy Address last October the establishment of the Greater Bay Area International Clinical Trial Institute (GBAICTI) in the Hetao Park of the Hetao Shenzhen-Hong Kong Science and Technology Innovation Co-operation Zone (i.e. the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park), the GBAICTI is anticipated to come into full operation in the fourth quarter of this year at the Central Government-Aided Emergency Hospital in the Hetao area upon completion of the construction of its temporary office and biobank therein. The GBAICTI plans to move into one of the wet laboratory-enabled buildings, which is expected to complete construction later in the Hong Kong-Shenzhen Innovation and Technology Park, with a view to enhancing Hong Kong's innovation and technology ecosystem in a proactive manner.

The HHB established the Greater Bay Area International Clinical Trial Institute Limited in the second quarter of this year and designated the LKS Faculty of Medicine of the University of Hong Kong through an open tender process in the third quarter to operate the GBAICTI. The Greater Bay Area International Clinical Trial Institute Limited is wholly owned by the Government to oversee the work of the operator and effectively supervise the operations of the GBAICTI.

Clinical trials are an important process in translating basic research on drug and medical device innovation into marketing authorisation and clinical application. The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) has high-quality healthcare professions, and a considerable amount of high-quality research data generated by local clinical trials over the years has been widely recognised by drug regulatory authorities both on the Mainland and abroad. The GBAICTI will serve as a one-stop clinical trial support platform to co-ordinate and integrate clinical trial resources in Hong Kong's public and private sectors, including universities, the Hospital Authority and private healthcare facilities, to give impetus to the development of clinical trials on all fronts.

The Secretary for Health, Professor Lo Chung-mau, said, "The establishment of the GBAICTI in the strategic location of the Hetao area can combine the strengths of Hong Kong and the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA), and leverage the development positioning of the Hetao Area for technology innovation and institutional innovation as well as the related cross-boundary facilitation measures, to provide multinational pharmaceutical enterprises, Mainland innovative biopharmaceutical enterprises, hospitals and research institutions with more efficient services, encouraging them to

conduct clinical trials in Hong Kong and the GBA, thereby expediting the translation of research results. We hope that this will attract more pharmaceutical and medical device enterprises within and outside Hong Kong to conduct clinical trials in Hong Kong to further enhance the city's capacity, recognition and status in terms of clinical trials and support a progressive transition to a primary evaluation approach for drug registration in Hong Kong."

The National 14th Five-Year Plan has expressed clear support to develop Hong Kong into an international innovation and technology hub. The Development Plan for Shenzhen Park of Hetao Shenzhen-Hong Kong Science and Technology Innovation Co-operation Zone promulgated by the State Council in August last year also indicated clear support for the co-ordinated development of the Hong Kong Park and the Shenzhen Park under the "one zone, two parks" model to promote the innovative application of cutting-edge biomedical technologies. The GBAICTI in the Hong Kong Park and the Greater Bay Area International Clinical Trial Centre in the Shenzhen Park will join forces to synergise the development of clinical trials, drive co-operation among the clinical trial networks of the HKSAR and the Mainland (the GBA in particular), and at the same time co-ordinate clinical trial work of both places to comply with national and international standards.

The GBAICTI will formulate work plans on initiatives including talent training, optimisation of processes and collaboration in the GBA. Details will be announced in due course.