

# Health Bureau instructs Hospital Authority to take forward deepening of reform work

The Health Bureau (HHB) announced today (November 22) that it has completed examining the review report submitted by the Hospital Authority (HA) in respect of the review conducted earlier in relation to systemic issues involved in hospital management. Agreeing with the direction of the 31 recommended measures and corresponding action plan, the HHB has instructed the HA to accord priority to taking forward the reform work aiming to enhance the latter's governance and structure, with a view to enhancing the overall quality and safety of public healthcare services and upholding public confidence in the public healthcare system.

The Secretary for Health, Professor Lo Chung-mau, said, "I would like to express my gratitude to the HA's Review Committee on the Management of the Public Hospital System for its in-depth review, which is comprehensive in scope and covers a wide range of the HA's issues, namely governance, appraisal, accountability and distribution of responsibilities, operations, risk management, procedural compliance and more. The review also involves multiple levels ranging from the HA Head Office to hospital clusters, hospitals departments and staff. I agreed with the direction of measures recommended by the Review Committee in the report and have instructed the HA to implement various enhancement measures in a timely manner while monitoring the implementation progress and effectiveness on an on-going basis, and submitting progress reports to the HHB on a regular basis."

The review report also pointed to the need to examine whether the HA's existing governance and management structure can continue to meet the present-day needs and circumstances of the complex public hospital system. In this connection, the HA will establish a Governance and Structure Reform Committee under the HA Board with the Chairman of the HA Board, Mr Henry Fan, being the Reform Committee Chairman to steer the implementation of recommendations made in the review report regarding governance, accountability and distribution of responsibilities, and relevant reform work. To ensure that timely policy directions and guidance will be given to the Reform Committee, the Permanent Secretary for Health and the Under Secretary for Health will serve as members of the Reform Committee.

Professor Lo said, "Confronted with pressures on the healthcare system due to an ageing population, a growing prevalence of chronic diseases and persistent increases in medical costs, we must deepen reforms regarding systemic and structural issues in overall public hospital management, so that our public healthcare system can provide the public with healthcare services with quality, safety and effectiveness in a sustainable manner and meet today's community needs while ensuring our valuable healthcare resources are put to good use. This work aligns precisely with the theme of this year's Policy Address, 'Reform for Enhancing Development and Building Our Future

Together'."

In light of a number of hospital incidents, the HHB instructed the HA in June this year to conduct a comprehensive review of the systemic issues and the need for reform with regard to the management of public hospitals, and submit a report and recommendations to the HHB. To this end, the HA established the Review Committee to examine the HA's performance across various areas including governance, appraisal, accountability and distribution of responsibilities, operations, risk management and procedural compliance, and subsequently submitted to the HA Board a report and recommendations for enhancements. Having studied in detail the recommendations made in the report, the HA Board and its management team submitted the report and its action plan to the HHB on October 8.