

Hong Kong West Cluster announces two incidents of loss of documents containing patient data

The following press release is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The spokesperson for Hong Kong West Cluster (HKWC) made the following announcement today (September 11) regarding two incidents of loss of documents containing patient data.

A laboratory jointly managed by the Obstetrics and Gynaecology Department of The University of Hong Kong and Queen Mary Hospital (QMH) reported that a work logbook was found missing on August 26. The logbook contained the English name, date of birth and identity card number of 815 patients who received services from February to August this year.

The logbook was used for daily work arrangement in the laboratory. It was last used on August 24, and later being kept in the area pending disposal. The area was restricted to access by staff with staff card and passcode. The logbook was found missing when a staff member wanted to transcribe the latest data into computer before disposal of the logbook on August 26. Thorough search was conducted but in vain.

Preliminary investigation confirmed that the treatment for the involved patients had not been affected by the incident. The hospital has been contacting the affected patients to inform them of the incident and extend apologies. Patients may contact the Patient Relations Office (2255 1366) for enquiry tomorrow (12 September) or on Monday to Friday (9am to 5pm). Subsequent to this incident, QMH will review the workflow regarding the storage and disposal of the laboratory work log. The hospital has also reminded staff to report any similar incidents timely in the future to increase the chance of finding the lost property. The hospital will continue with the investigation of the incident and the searching.

In addition, a doctor of Tung Wah Group of Hospitals Fung Yiu King Hospital (FYKH) offered Community Geriatric Assessment service at an old age home yesterday (September 10). After finishing consultation, the staff drove back to the hospital and left a folder at a public carpark near the old age home. The folder carried a list with Chinese and English names, identity card numbers, sex and age of 28 patients, together with the prescription sheets of 24 of these patients. As the doctor arrived at FYKH, he discovered that the folder was missing. Chief of Service of the department was informed and the doctor immediately headed back to the old age home for a thorough search. The path along the journey had been searched as well but in vain.

Preliminary investigation confirmed that the treatment for the involved patients had not been affected by the incident. The hospital had already

contacted all the affected patients to explain and extend apologies. The hospital will review the practice of staff bringing patient list while providing outreach services.

The cluster is highly concerned about the two incidents and has notified the Hospital Authority Head Office through the Advance Incident Reporting System (AIRS). The two incidents have been reported both to the Police and the Office of the Privacy Commissioner for Personal Data.