

Hospital Authority activates three more designated clinics

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

To cope with the rapid and huge increase in number of confirmed patients, which has overwhelmed the capacity of public hospitals and the community treatment and isolation facilities, the Hospital Authority (HA) announced today (March 6) that it will activate three more designated clinics for confirmed cases of COVID-19 tomorrow (March 7) to help provide diagnosis and treatment for the people with positive test results, and those people who are presenting with relatively mild symptoms of infection (e.g., fever, cough, sore throat) requiring medical advice while awaiting admission to hospitals or isolation facilities.

"The HA had activated fourteen designated clinics earlier for confirmed cases of COVID-19. As at 5pm on March 5, the designated clinics have provided over 25 000 attendances. The three newly activated designated clinics are East Kowloon General Out-patient Clinic, Mrs Wu York Yu General Out-patient Clinic and Tai Po Jockey Club General Out-patient Clinic, adding up a total of 17 designated clinics," the HA spokesperson said.

In order to implement appropriate infection control arrangements, people seeking consultation must make appointments by telephone to avoid people queuing at the clinics. The healthcare staff of the designated clinics will provide appropriate treatment according to the patient's clinical condition, and will transfer the patient to the hospitals for further treatment if required.

The designated clinics are open from Monday to Sunday, including public holidays, from 9am to 1pm, and 2pm to 5pm. Eligible patients should call the selected designated clinic to make an appointment, and will be provided the earliest appointment timeslot in the next 24 hours.

Normal general out-patient services at the designated clinics, including the related evening, Sunday and public holidays service, will be suspended starting from tomorrow. In addition, in order to focus manpower and resources to support the services of the designated clinics, some other General Out-patient Clinics will also temporarily suspend services from tomorrow onwards. Episodic patients who have an appointment made via telephone booking or mobile application "HA GO" are advised to seek consultation at other General Out-patient Clinics or at private clinics. Chronic patients with follow-up appointments at the clinics are advised to refill their drugs at the designated Medication Refill Clinics in the district on the appointment day by presenting their appointment slips and identity cards. For the list of Designated Clinics for COVID-19 Confirmed Cases and the corresponding medication refill clinics, see Annex 1; for the list of General Out-patient Clinics with temporary services suspension and the corresponding Medication Refill Clinics, see Annex 2.

COVID-19 vaccination service will also be suspended. Government will send text messages to citizens who have made appointments for COVID-19 vaccination at the related designated clinics and advise them to go to other community vaccination centres for vaccination service.

The distribution of deep throat saliva specimen collection packs and collection service of specimens at the three designated clinics will also be suspended. Citizens are advised to go to other selected General Out-patient Clinics or service points designated by the Government at specified time for obtaining the specimen collection packs or submitting the specimens. Details on the specimen collection packs distribution points and specimen collection points are available at the following website:
www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/early-testing.html.

The HA will closely monitor the service needs and operation of the designated clinics to dovetail with the latest development of the epidemic. The HA once again thanks the public for their patience and for being accommodating in complying with the arrangements so that the isolation facilities in public hospitals can accord priority to the confirmed elderly, young patients and patients with special medical needs. With the gradual increase in community treatment and isolation facilities, the remaining confirmed patients will be admitted in an orderly manner.