

Hospital Authority follows up on unsatisfactory image quality of nuclear medicine investigations

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The Hospital Authority (HA) spokesperson today (June 12) said a supplier had been requested to look into an incident of unsatisfactory image quality with the radiopharmaceuticals technetium-99m sestamibi (Tc-99m MIBI) and technetium-99m sulphur colloid (Tc-99m SC) showing altered biodistribution.

The HA spokesperson said, "Reports were received from a few Nuclear Medicine Centres in the HA about unsatisfactory image quality of some patients earlier this week. All of the Centres were alerted to review procedures that involved the use of Tc-99m. The affected radiopharmaceuticals were immediately suspended for use in the HA.

"While the nuclear medicine scans with the affected radiopharmaceuticals have not caused any adverse effects to patients, a total of 12 patients will need to repeat the scans to complete the diagnostic procedures for appropriate clinical management and treatment planning."

The hospitals concerned have contacted the patients to explain the incident and schedule repeat nuclear medicine scans.

"The amount of radiation exposure associated with a repeat nuclear medicine scan is assessed to be low and within the usual limits for a radiological examination," the spokesperson added.

The HA apologised to the patients for the inconvenience caused in repeating the scans and will closely liaise with the supplier for the investigation to prevent recurrence of the incident. The HA has communicated with the Department of Health regarding this particular incident.