

Hospital Authority fully supports breastfeeding

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

Pledging full support to breastfeeding and along the theme "Protect Breastfeeding: A Shared Responsibility" of World Breastfeeding Week 2021, the Hospital Authority (HA) will work with various stakeholders in the community to proactively promote breastfeeding.

The HA established a Breastfeeding Promotion Committee in 1998 to promote breastfeeding in public hospitals through organising talks, exhibitions and other promotional events. Frontline healthcare workers also teach the parents of newborn babies the benefits and skills of breastfeeding.

The Chairman of the HA Coordinating Committee (Obstetrics and Gynaecology), Dr Au Yeung Kam-chuen, said, "Breast milk is the most natural and healthy food for babies. Besides encouraging mothers to breastfeed their babies, we also appeal to the community for creating a breastfeeding-friendly environment. Well-equipped breastfeeding rooms can now be found in many public hospitals for the convenience of patients, visitors and staff members.

"During breastfeeding training courses in the current epidemic, healthcare workers also address concerns of new mothers towards the disease and vaccinations, such as getting vaccinated while breastfeeding. Healthcare workers will encourage mothers to get vaccinated, to protect themselves and to transfer antibodies to their babies through the breast milk."

The eight public hospitals with obstetrics and gynaecology departments commenced preparation for "Baby Friendly Hospital" accreditation several years ago, aiming at building a breastfeeding-friendly environment through the enhancement of hospital facilities, training for healthcare workers and organising breastfeeding promotional activities. Three public hospitals, namely Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Queen Mary Hospital and Prince of Wales Hospital, have already completed the accreditation. The remaining hospitals are scheduled to complete the process by the end of this year and within next year to be officially named as a "Baby Friendly Hospital".

The HA will continue to enhance training for healthcare workers in the future. A large scale webinar will also be held soon for breastfeeding experts to share the latest breastfeeding information with healthcare workers for transferring knowledge to parents of newborn babies.