

Hospital Authority opens Hong Kong Poison Control Centre to enhance poison control and treatment in public healthcare sector (with photos)

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The Hospital Authority (HA) announced the opening of the Hong Kong Poison Control Centre (HKPCC) today (November 24). Responding to the policy direction of "The Chief Executive's 2022 Policy Address", the HKPCC will co-ordinate poison control work in the public healthcare sector of Hong Kong to enhance clinical toxicology and treatment for patients suffering from poisoning, so as to safeguard the health and safety of the public.

The opening ceremony was officiated by the Chairman of the HA, Mr Henry Fan; the Permanent Secretary for Health, Mr Thomas Chan; and the Director of Health, Dr Ronald Lam. Other guests at the ceremony included the Chief Executive of the HA, Dr Tony Ko; the Controller of the Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health, Dr Edwin Tsui; the Chief Expert of Poison Control, Chinese Centre for Disease Control and Prevention, Dr Sun Chengye; the Chairman of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Poison Treatment Alliance, Dr Lau Fei-lung; and the Medical Director of the HKPCC, Dr Tse Man-li.

Mr Fan said, "The HKPCC has marked a significant milestone in poison control of the public healthcare sector in Hong Kong. From now on, poison information consultation, toxicology laboratory services and treatment will be integrated, which helps enhance resources utilisation and service efficiency."

Currently, the HA's clinical toxicology service is mainly provided by four different units, namely the Hong Kong Poison Information Centre at United Christian Hospital (UCH), which offers 24-hour telephone consultation and guidance services; the Poison Treatment Centre at Prince of Wales Hospital, which provides treatment especially for patients with unusual poisoning; the Toxicology Reference Laboratory at Princess Margaret Hospital, which offers tertiary clinical toxicology laboratory services, and the Toxicovigilance Team of the Chief Pharmacist's Office at HA Head Office, which is responsible for monitoring poisoning reports and the alert system, jointly supporting the development of clinical toxicology services in public hospitals.

The HKPCC will gradually integrate relevant services to strengthen the poison control and treatment for patients suffering from poisoning so as to render a swift response and co-ordinated treatment during large-scale poisoning incidents to ascertain the safety and health of the public. The

HKPCC has expanded, or will expand its services in different areas in the future, as follows:

- The HKPCC has recently established an Integrated Chinese-Western Medicine (ICWM) Treatment Safety Office to make recommendations on ICWM applications, to update and evaluate safety guidelines regularly, and to provide training for Chinese medicine practitioners and dispensers to ensure medication safety for supporting ICWM development;
- Set up a Drug of Abuse (DoA) Early Warning Office to enhance reports and provide a prompt warning of emerging novel DoAs to government departments to safeguard the health and safety of the public;
- Set up an Antidote Coordination Office for central stockpiling and co-ordination of antidote applications; and
- Open a Poison Treatment Unit at UCH to strengthen in-patient clinical toxicology services.

Mr Fan said that the HA will continue to strengthen poison control and treatment, amid enhanced emergency treatment in Hong Kong and the Mainland through exchanges and co-operation with medical institutions in the Greater Bay Area.

