

Hospital Authority welcomes 2022-23 budget

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The Hospital Authority (HA) Chairman, Mr Henry Fan, welcomed the 2022-23 Budget announced by the Financial Secretary, Mr Paul Chan, today (February 23) to the Legislative Council, which would increase the annual subvention for the HA from \$83.0 billion (including \$81.3 billion recurrent) in 2021-22 to \$92.1 billion (including \$90.4 billion recurrent) in 2022-23, representing growth of 11 per cent compared to the 2021-22 revised provision, which includes \$7.5 billion for tackling the epidemic.

"I would like to express gratitude to the Government's commitment to sustain the development of public healthcare with the increased financial provision to the HA, despite facing the pressure of the economic downturn under the impact of the fifth wave of the epidemic," Mr Fan said.

Mr Fan is also thankful for the Government's continuous support to the HA in combating the epidemic. "Facing the rapid development of the fifth wave, the whole HA stayed united in combating the epidemic. I am grateful for the support from the Government in significantly enhancing the HA's capability in curbing the epidemic. The HA will continue to utilise the resources to further enhance public hospitals' capability in managing infectious diseases."

Mr Fan added that in view of staff turnover, the HA will continue to implement various measures to retain staff and attract new recruits to join the public healthcare system. Measures include extending employment beyond the retirement age and the introduction of a low-interest home loan scheme for staff; enhancing promotion opportunities and career development for doctors; creating new Associate Nurse Consultant post to strengthen the career ladder and professional prospects for nursing staff; and the establishment of the Hospital Authority Academy for nurturing healthcare professionals.

The HA Chief Executive, Dr Tony Ko, also expressed appreciation to the Government for its resource support in improving the working environment and patient services of the HA.

"The HA will continue to launch services, including the addition of around 390 beds, enhancing services in accident and emergency departments, general outpatient clinics, specialist outpatient clinics and diagnostic radiology, increasing operating theatres, endoscopic sessions and strengthening pharmacy services to meet with the increasing service demand," Dr Ko said.

In chronic disease management, the HA will continue to enhance support to cancer patients by strengthening radiotherapy and chemotherapy services

and expanding the cancer case manager programme. For life-threatening diseases, the HA will enhance percutaneous coronary intervention and acute ischaemic stroke services. The HA will also continue to enhance mental health services for children and adolescents with mental health needs as well as enhance community psychiatric services to strengthen support for patients.

"We will strengthen elderly services including palliative care services to cope with the service demand for the ageing population. The HA will continue to promote the development of smart hospitals and expand the service of Hong Kong Children's Hospital. Moreover, we will continue to implement more public-private partnership programmes to allow patients to have more choices and also facilitate the sustainable development of the public healthcare system," said Dr Ko.