

Hospital Authority welcomes budget allocation in 2020-21

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The Hospital Authority (HA) Chairman, Mr Henry Fan welcomed the 2020-21 Budget announced by the Financial Secretary, Mr Paul Chan today (February 26) at the Legislative Council, which would increase the annual subvention for HA from \$72.5 billion (including \$71.4 billion recurrent) in 2019-20 to \$76.6 billion (including \$75 billion recurrent) in 2020-21. Compared with the 2017-18 actual provisions, the cumulative growth has been 36 per cent (35 per cent for the recurrent provision). The estimates for 2020-21 have yet to include the \$4.7 billion just approved by the Legislative Council Finance Committee for tackling the epidemic.

"Despite the economic downturn, we are delighted to witness Government's commitment to sustain the development of public healthcare with the increased financial provision to the HA," said Mr Fan.

Mr Fan expressed gratitude to the Government's financial support, which allows the HA to enhance staff promotion opportunities and boost the morale of frontline staff to retain them to serve in public hospitals.

"We will enhance the promotion opportunities for Associate Consultants to promote to Consultants and additional posts of Nurse Consultants to enhance the career progression prospects for frontline healthcare workers. The HA will also enhance the training and promotion opportunities for supporting staff to attract more people to work in public hospitals."

"With the Government's strong support, service commissioning in phases in Hong Kong Children's Hospital, Tin Shui Wai Hospital and North Lantau Hospital is in progress. To modernise public hospitals, the HA will enhance Positron Emission Tomography-Computed Tomography service, apart from enhancing various information technology systems to streamline workflow and enhance efficiency," Mr Fan added.

The HA Chief Executive, Dr Tony Ko also expressed appreciation to the Government for the resources support in improving working environment and patient services of the HA. "We are particularly grateful for the Government's support for us to launch new services, including the addition of 400 beds to meet the growing service demand and improve healthcare service quality."

"We will continue to enhance patients' access to general outpatient and specialist outpatient services, alongside the enhancement in Accident and Emergency, Operating Theatre, diagnostic radiology, endoscopic and pharmacy services to meet the increasing service demand," said Dr Ko.

"The coverage of HA Drug Formulary will be widened for treating hepatitis, oncology and cardiovascular diseases. Public hospitals will further enhance support to cancer patients by strengthening inpatient and consultation services, radiotherapy and chemotherapy services, and expanding the cancer case manager programme. Mental health services for children and adolescents as well as psychogeriatric outreach services will be strengthened."

Dr Ko thanked the Government again for the additional funding allocation of \$4.7 billion to the HA earlier for tackling the COVID-19 epidemic. The HA will ensure the prudent deployment of the funding to better equip public hospitals in managing the epidemic in various aspects, including frontline healthcare manpower; temporary accommodation arrangements and allowances; additional personal protective equipment; enhancing laboratory support; and strengthening a range of hospital support services including cleansing, transportation and supplies.