

# Hospital Authority welcomes “The Chief Executive’s 2024 Policy Address”

The Hospital Authority (HA) Chairman, Mr Henry Fan, welcomed the healthcare service-related measures included in "The Chief Executive's 2024 Policy Address" delivered by the Chief Executive, Mr John Lee, today (October 16). It is believed that the measures will facilitate the HA in enhancing the quality of public healthcare services and sustainable development to improve support to patients.

The HA will dovetail with the Government's policies and development directions, and continue to enhance the capacity and quality of public healthcare services in order to cope with the demand. The HA will continue to enhance the triage system and referral arrangements of the Specialist Out-Patients Clinics (SOPC), so that patients with acute needs could receive services in a timely manner and patients with mild and stable conditions may also receive appropriate follow-up. The waiting time of the SOPC could be shortened by avoiding unnecessary referrals. The HA will also provide additional capacity for cataract surgeries to actively arrange surgeries for patients.

Mr Fan said, "The HA welcomes the Government's initiatives to promote community pharmacies. By strengthening the procurement of drugs and medical devices, the introduction of new drugs to the Drug Formulary will be expedited. The rationalisation and centralisation of procurement will also accelerate the cost-effectiveness standards and guarantee the optimised use of healthcare resources. The HA will also integrate paediatric services in order to make the best use of the Hong Kong Children's Hospital to fulfil its function as the Centre of Excellence in Paediatrics, thereby enhancing the quality of paediatric care in Hong Kong and providing a platform conducive to research development and professional training. The paediatric services will also be expanded, including an increase in the scope of newborn screening and treatment for neurosurgical diseases, to increase the quality of the services.

Also, with the stringent support from the Government, the HA will continue to enhance healthcare services in public hospitals. In accordance with the national accreditation standard, the development of the second chest pain centre at Prince of Wales Hospital and the building of the first stroke centre will boost diagnostic efficiency, outcomes and patient survival rates, while the breastmilk bank to be set up at Hong Kong Children's Hospital will provide breastmilk for preterm and critically ill infants.

The HA is fully committed to driving forward a wide range of development projects under the First Hospital Development Plan. The HA is finalising the Second Hospital Development Plan to dovetail with the upcoming territorial development (including the Northern Metropolis and the latest developments in other New Development Areas), the Government population census, population

distribution projection and the necessary land supply. The HA will continue to augment the service capacity of public hospitals as well as renewing its facilities in order to meet the service demand.

Mr Fan expressed heartfelt appreciation for the Government's support for the public healthcare services. The HA will strive to implement the initiatives for the benefit of patients.