

Jockey Club Cancer Research Laboratory opens in Queen Elizabeth Hospital (with photos)

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH) held the Opening Ceremony of the Jockey Club Cancer Research Laboratory today (September 4) to mark the completion of a redevelopment programme. Equipped with a large Cancer Biobank and specialised cancer research equipment with advanced technologies, the redeveloped Laboratory provides a professional cancer research platform for public hospitals under the Hospital Authority (HA), bringing together doctors and researchers to carry out various forms of scientific and translational medical research conducive to cancer diagnosis and treatment, which can benefit more patients.

The officiating guests at the Opening Ceremony included Steward of the Hong Kong Jockey Club (HKJC) Mr Michael Lee; the HA Chairman, Professor John Leong; the HA Chief Executive, Dr Leung Pak-yin; the Chairman of the QEH Hospital Governing Committee, Dr Kam Pok-man; and the Cluster Chief Executive of Kowloon Central Cluster and Hospital Chief Executive of QEH, Dr Albert Lo.

Officiating at the ceremony, Professor Leong expressed gratitude to the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust for its generous donation and unfailing support for cancer research. "With the generous support of the Trust, our Laboratory has become the largest cancer research laboratory in the HA alongside the similar facilities in the two local university hospitals. It shoulders the responsibility of building a cancer biobank. I would like to take this opportunity to thank our QEH oncology team, and hope that they will keep up their professionalism and seek patients' support in collecting tissue and blood specimens, which enables translation of research findings into applications ranging from cancer prevention and diagnosis to treatment, bringing benefits to more patients."

Also speaking at the ceremony, Mr Lee said the HKJC hoped that its support for the redevelopment of the Cancer Research Laboratory could help to increase the effectiveness of cancer diagnosis and treatment, benefiting more cancer patients. "The Club believes that prevention is better than cure, and that regular check-ups and early treatment are very important, especially in dealing with cancer," he said. "Therefore the Club has been investing actively in cancer prevention and treatment, as well as co-operating with different organisations to enhance cancer-related services."

On behalf of the QEH Hospital Governing Committee and hospital staff, Dr Kam expressed heartfelt thanks to the Trust for its generous donation to upgrade the Laboratory into a well-equipped research platform where research knowledge would be explored to benefit patients of various cancer types in

Hong Kong.

Located in the Department of Clinical Oncology of QEH, the Cancer Research Laboratory has undergone redevelopment since 2014 with the generous donation of \$54.7 million from the Trust. Following interior renovation, enhancement of laboratory facilities and installation of high-end research equipment, the whole project was completed in 2017. The key research areas of the Laboratory include setting up a Cancer Biobank, genomic study and cancer biomarker research, cell line and animal experiments, preclinical tests for anti-cancer drugs, and histological and cytological analyses. The state-of-the-art equipment enables laboratory researchers to conduct cancer research and analyses leading to applications in cancer screening and diagnosis.

The redeveloped Laboratory has established a large Cancer Biobank, which is research infrastructure to facilitate cancer study, in the hope that it will become a base for collection of cancer specimens. Tumour specimens such as tissues of various cancer types, blood and body fluids collected from cancer patients will be stored in ultra-low temperature freezers or liquid nitrogen storage tanks.

Researchers will access the stored specimens from the Cancer Biobank and conduct genomic study on the specimens with the application of high-end equipment like a next-generation sequencer, confocal and fluorescent microscopy and more to identify cancer biomarkers for cancer prognostication, disease monitoring and prevention, screening and treatment, as well as culturing cancer cells for anti-cancer drug tests. The Laboratory has set a target of collecting hundreds of tumour specimens and thousands of blood samples annually from the HA cancer centres in the coming five years. Currently the Laboratory's researchers are working closely with QEH oncologists in studying the development of common cancers in Hong Kong such as nasopharyngeal cancer, lung cancer and breast cancer, as well as finding cancer-associated genes and cancer biomarkers for local populations in order to improve cancer diagnosis and treatment outcomes.

