

# North District Hospital announces malfunction incidents of the negative pressure system in the isolation ward

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The spokesperson for the North District Hospital made the following announcement today (May 11) concerning the malfunction incidents of the negative pressure system in the isolation ward:

In view of two malfunction incidents of the negative pressure exhaust system of the isolation ward in the recent few days, the Hospital has requested the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department to thoroughly check the system concerned to prevent similar incidents from happening again.

During both incidents, all doors of the cubicles and rooms in the isolation ward had been kept closed. Two COVID-19 confirmed patients were being hospitalised in two different single rooms at the time and both had not left their rooms. The healthcare staff inside the ward had all worn appropriate personal protective equipment including N95 respirators and isolation gowns and no high-risk procedure was performed. There were no visitors either. The infection risk has been assessed to be very low.

The first incident happened at 10.05am last Friday (May 8). An earth fault occurred at one of the exhaust fans of the negative pressure exhaust system and the system alarm was triggered. The Electrical and Mechanical Services Department, which is responsible for the system maintenance, immediately carried out emergency repair works and changed over the faulty exhaust fan to a stand-by exhaust fan in accordance with the contingency plan. The system resumed normal at 10.24am after repair. The replacement work of the defective exhaust fan was completed that night.

The other incident happened at 2.15pm yesterday (May 10). The alarm system indicated that a damper of the negative pressure exhaust system in a single room was not functioning properly. The Electrical and Mechanical Services Department performed emergency maintenance and the system resumed normal at 2.25pm.

The concerned negative pressure exhaust system has been functioning properly since the annual overhaul conducted from August to September last year. The Hospital is highly concerned about the incidents and has reported them to the Hospital Authority Head Office via the Advance Incident Reporting System.