

North District Hospital announces review report and recommendations on incident of missing autopsy specimen

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The spokesperson for North District Hospital (NDH) today (June 15) announced the review report and recommendations on an incident concerning a missing autopsy specimen.

An expert review panel was set up following the announcement by NDH in April this year on an incident concerning a missing autopsy specimen. The panel was tasked to review the root cause of the incident and also make improvement recommendations. The review report was completed and submitted to the Hospital Authority Head Office. Regarding the case of the missing autopsy specimen, it was reported to the Police and the investigation is still ongoing.

A number of improvements have been recommended by the panel to enhance the management and security of autopsy specimen storage and handling in public hospitals. The HA has accepted the report and its recommendations and will consider the necessary actions.

NDH is very concerned about the incident and will follow up to put in place the recommendations to prevent recurrence of similar incidents. The hospital has already implemented the following enhanced measures after the incident:

1. Lock all storage rooms for autopsy specimens and specific documents all the time and restrict access to designated persons only;
2. Implement security control strictly and enhance regular patrol of the mortuary;
3. Enhance traceability and handling procedures for specimens; and
4. Install an access control system and additional CCTV to monitor the situation in the mortuary.

The hospital has communicated with the family of the deceased patient on the review recommendations and again extended its apologies. Appreciation was also expressed to the Chairman and members of the expert review panel for their contributions and recommendations. Membership of the panel is as follows:

Chairman:

Dr Gavin Chan

Consultant, Department of Pathology, Queen Mary Hospital

Members:

Mr Steve Chan
Cluster General Manager (Administration Services), New Territories West
Cluster

Mr Wong Wing-ming
Department Manager, Department of Pathology, Tseung Kwan O Hospital

Dr Flora Tsang
Senior Manager (Patient Safety & Risk Management), HA Head Office