

Results of Hong Kong Chinese Materia Medica Standards (Phase X) announced

The Department of Health (DH) today (December 22) published reference standards on safety and quality for 31 commonly used Chinese Materia Medica (CMM) in Phase X of the Hong Kong Chinese Materia Medica Standards (HKCMMS).

"The HKCMMS Project was launched in 2002. With the concerted efforts of our collaboration partners throughout the past years, the HKCMMS have become well-recognised reference standards in the field of Chinese medicine testing and certification, and have contributed to promoting the use of evidence-based, safe and quality Chinese medicines," a DH spokesman said.

"This volume is the tenth of the series setting out reference standards for CMM commonly used in Hong Kong. Up to now, the number of CMM with reference standards totals 330. Noting the latest development in instrumental technology for testing organochlorine pesticide (OCP) residues, we have added gas chromatography with tandem mass spectrometry (GC-MS/MS) for the determination of OCP in this volume, promoting and enhancing the application of testing methods. In addition, we have published a third monograph on animal originated CMM, which has employed deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) fingerprinting technology for CMM authentication," the spokesman added.

The criteria for selection of CMM for the research include the following:

- * common usage in the local community;
- * international concern in respect of their safety and quality;
- * high economic value in the local market; and
- * priority being accorded to the CMM listed in the two schedules of the Chinese Medicine Ordinance.

Research work was conducted by research teams from six local universities, namely the Chinese University of Hong Kong, the City University of Hong Kong, the Hong Kong Baptist University, the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology and the University of Hong Kong as well as Taiwan's China Medical University.

An International Advisory Board comprising local, Mainland and overseas experts advised on the research principles, methodologies, parameters and analytical methods of the HKCMMS. The Government Laboratory developed analytical methods for determination of heavy metals, pesticide residues and mycotoxins, and participated in inter-laboratory verification. The National Medical Products Administration and the National Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine also provided their valuable advice and support.

The HKCMMS Volume X sets out the names, sources and descriptions of the 31 CMM, as well as methods of identification (including microscopic

identification, thin-layer chromatographic identification and high-performance liquid chromatographic fingerprinting identification), tests and assays. The 31 CMM are Ardisiae Japonicae Herba, Artemisiae Anomalae Herba, Catharanthi Rosei Herba, Commelinae Herba, Crotonis Fructus (unprocessed), Deinagkistrodon (Agkistrodon), Dendrobii Caulis, Dioscoreae Bulbiferae Rhizoma, Eupatorii Chinensis Radix et Rhizoma, Euphorbiae Hirtae Herba, Euphorbiae Pekinensis Radix, Fici Pumilae Receptaculum, Geranii Caroliniani Herba, Hyperici Ascyri Herba, Impatientis Caulis, Isodonis Herba, Leonuri Fructus, Nigellae Semen, Osmundae Rhizoma, Phyllanthi Urinariae Herba, Picrasmae Ramulus et Folium, Polygonati Rhizoma, Ranunculi Ternati Radix, Rhododendri Daurici Folium, Salviae Plebeiae Herba, Sambuci Williamsii Ramulus, Sargentodoxae Caulis, Saxifragae Herba, Sedi Herba, Tamaricis Cacumen and Valerianae Radix et Rhizoma.

The DH will arrange online briefing sessions for the Chinese medicines trade as well as representatives of laboratories to update them on the latest research development of the HKCMMS Project.

The HKCMMS Volume X is now available for public access at www.cmro.gov.hk/html/eng/GCMTI/hkcmms/volumes.html. For enquiries, please contact the DH at 2319 8562.