

Secretary for Food and Health welcomes experts from NHC to Hong Kong (with photos/video)

The Secretary for Food and Health, Professor Sophia Chan, today (March 1) welcomed the Head of the National Health Commission's COVID-19 leading task force, Professor Liang Wannian, who is leading a delegation of Mainland experts to Hong Kong for a field visit and offering guidance in Hong Kong's fight against the epidemic.

Professor Chan; the Permanent Secretary for Food and Health (Health), Mr Thomas Chan; the Director of Health, Dr Ronald Lam; and a number of officials held a meeting at the Central Government Offices this morning with Professor Liang and the Mainland experts led by him as well as Mainland experts from the task force of epidemiologists. They exchanged views on the epidemic situation in Hong Kong and discussed the challenges posed by the fifth wave of the epidemic. Mainland experience in tackling the epidemic was also discussed.

In the afternoon, Professor Chan; Mr Chan; the Chairman of the Hospital Authority (HA), Mr Henry Fan; and the Chief Executive of the HA, Dr Tony Ko, exchanged views with Professor Liang and the Mainland expert delegation. At the meeting, the HA's representatives briefed the delegation on the conditions of admitted patients who have contracted COVID-19 and the treatment approach in the city. Members of the Government's anti-epidemic expert advisory group Professor Gabriel Leung, Professor Yuen Kwok-yung and Professor David Hui, as well as other experts including Professor Wallace Lau, Professor Lau Yu-lung and Professor Ivan Hung, also attended the meeting.

"I am very grateful for Professor Liang and his delegation's visit to the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) to provide advice on our anti-epidemic work. The two meetings today were very thorough and constructive. In the coming few days, we will continue to explore strategies and measures to put the fifth wave of the epidemic situation under control based on the initial recommendations suggested by the experts. At the meeting, I also briefed the expert delegation on the recent adjustments to the HKSAR Government's epidemic control measures having regard to the risk assessment and optimum use of resources. These included wider adoption of rapid antigen tests, persistently conducting 'restriction-testing declaration' operations on targeted buildings with higher risk, strengthening of the multi-tiered approach in providing treatment based on patients' conditions and other factors, and so forth. The experts have also discussed some constructive views, such as how to further enhance social distancing measures and make better use of medical resources, so as to race against time to cut transmission chains and put the epidemic situation under control," Professor Chan said.

Professor Liang arrived in Hong Kong yesterday (February 28), leading four Mainland experts. Professor Liang is also the Executive Vice Dean of the Vanke School of Public Health of Tsinghua University. The four other Mainland experts are the Executive Dean of the School of Population Medicine and Public Health of Peking Union Medical College, Professor Yang Weizhong; the Director of the Public Health Emergency Center of the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Mr Li Qun; researcher of the Public Health Emergency Center of the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention Ms Xiang Nijuan; and senior research scientist of the School of Public Health of Peking University Ms Liu Jue.

At the same time, the epidemiological experts who arrived in Hong Kong earlier joined the expert delegation led by Professor Liang to continue their visit in Hong Kong. They are the Director of the Institute of Infectious Disease Control and Prevention of the Guangdong Provincial Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Mr Kang Min; senior public health doctor of the Guangzhou Center for Disease Control and Prevention Ms Chen Chun; the Director of the Public Health Emergency Management Department of the Zhongshan Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Ms Chen Xueqin; and general office clerk of the Guangdong Provincial Center for Disease Control and Prevention Mr Yang Taohui.

In the next few days, the delegation will discuss and analyse data with Hong Kong public health system experts about the prevention and control measures to get a better grasp of the actual work of Hong Kong in fighting the epidemic with a view to conducting more in-depth analysis and assessment of the epidemic and offer guidance.

