

Secretary for Health attends 2023 GBA Medical Products Administration Conference in Zhuhai (with photos)

The Secretary for Health, Professor Lo Chung-mau, led a delegation to attend the 2023 Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA) Medical Products Administration Conference in Zhuhai today (October 25), and introduced the new initiatives in "The Chief Executive's 2023 Policy Address" of developing Hong Kong into a health and medical innovation hub.

The Conference was organised by the Guangdong Provincial Medical Products Administration (GDMPA) with the aims of sharing work experience on drug regulation, promoting the implementation of the Work Plan for Regulatory Innovation and Development of Pharmaceutical and Medical Device in the GBA (Work Plan), enhancing the working mechanism for regulatory collaborations on drugs and medical devices in the GBA, and pushing forward the innovation development on regulating drugs and medical devices in the region.

The Conference was chaired by the General Director of the GDMPA, Mr Jiang Xiaodong. Deputy Commissioner of the National Medical Products Administration Mr Zhao Junning also sat in on the Conference. Representatives from Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao held in-depth exchanges on various aspects at the Conference, including the current situation of drugs and medical devices regulation, the implementation of the Work Plan, and suggestions on the way forward.

Professor Lo introduced to the representatives of Guangdong and Macao the new initiatives just announced by the Chief Executive in the Policy Address of developing Hong Kong into a health and medical innovation hub, including the setting up of a preparatory office for the Hong Kong Centre for Medical Products Regulation, which will be a step towards the transition to the "primary evaluation" approach in approving applications for registration of new pharmaceutical products, as well as promoting co-operation of the clinical trial networks between Hong Kong and the Mainland, so as to further leverage Hong Kong's medical strength and enhance medical standards. He said, "We expect these new initiatives can attract more local, Mainland and overseas pharmaceutical and medical device enterprises to conduct research and development and clinical trials in Hong Kong, and build up the capacity, recognition and status at different stages to ensure that the eventual approval mechanism of drugs and medical devices of Hong Kong would be widely recognised internationally and by the Mainland.

"Our objective is to protect the health and safety of the public through the establishment of a more active and efficient regulatory and registration system of drugs and medical devices, and to expedite the clinical application of the most advanced drugs and medical devices to patients."

The Director of Health, Dr Ronald Lam, also introduced the latest developments on the regulatory mechanism of drugs, medical devices and Chinese medicine at the Conference. He said, "Hong Kong has all along been endeavouring to enhance the regulatory system on drugs. In the future, we will further improve the arrangements for approving applications for registration of pharmaceutical products with a view to maintaining Hong Kong's drug regulatory system at an advanced international level and further strengthening Hong Kong's world-leading position in drug development."

Separately, a pilot run of the risk communication mechanism on drugs and medical devices in the GBA was also discussed at the Conference. This communication mechanism is one of collaboration items in the Memorandum of Understanding on Drugs and Medical Devices Monitoring and Co-operation in the GBA signed by the governments of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao early this year.

The Hong Kong delegation will return to Hong Kong this evening. Other members of the delegation include Deputy Secretary for Health Mr Eddie Lee; the Assistant Director of Health (Drug), Mr Frank Chan; the Assistant Director of Health (Health Sciences and Technology), Dr Alice Wong; and the Assistant Director of Health (Chinese Medicine), Dr Edmund Fong.

