

Secretary for Health visits Hospital Authority information technology and innovation facilities (with photos)

The Secretary for Health, Professor Lo Chung-mau, visited information technology and innovation facilities of the Hospital Authority (HA) this afternoon (July 14) to get a better grasp of the latest progress of HA's work on facilitating the use of technology to enhance clinical and medical services.

Accompanied by the Director (Quality and Safety) of the HA, Dr Michael Wong, and the Chief Medical Informatics Officer of the HA, Dr Joanna Pang, Professor Lo and the Under Secretary for Health, Dr Libby Lee, first visited the IT Command Centre to learn more about the HA's work on upgrading its information technology system, and securing its operation and maintenance. They then proceeded to visit the HA Data Collaboration Lab and the AI Lab to understand the HA's work on healthcare data analytics, and to learn from HA staff about their support to the development of the Electronic Health Record Sharing System (eHealth). They also visited the IT Innovation Lab to know more about the development progress of smart hospitals.

"The Chief Executive stated in the 2022 Policy Address the plan to pursue collaboration between the HA and the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation on exploring the use of the HA's clinical data for research and development (R&D). I am pleased to see that the HA, in support of the direction set out in the Policy Address, has established a dedicated team to drive the potential use of healthcare data for R&D by more institutions in collaboration with the HA, and enable the institutions to make use of the public hospital network for research and clinical trial purposes," Professor Lo said.

"The Policy Address also mentioned the need to actively promote eHealth. The eHealth currently facilitates the sharing of medical records for healthcare service providers. We are working to transform eHealth into a comprehensive and integrated healthcare information infrastructure with a patient-centric perspective under the guiding principle of 'one patient, one health record' so that the upgraded eHealth will serve as the backbone for supporting healthcare development. The HA is an important partner of the Government in making the transformation of eHealth a success.

"Developing smart hospitals is a key strategy for the sustainable development of the public healthcare system. Healthcare staff can provide high quality services to patients with the aid of technology such as 5G remote diagnosis and treatment technology, and smart robots. These technologies can also alleviate, in the long run, the imbalance of manpower supply and service demands faced by the public healthcare system," Professor Lo stressed.

The Government announced in 2017 that the HA would establish a big data analytics platform to support the formulation of healthcare policies. To generate value for healthcare research and stimulate innovative ideas through the platform, the HA Data Collaboration Lab was set up as a new alternative channel for more flexible and interactive data sharing in the HA, and to provide a safe and privacy-protected environment for the HA and researchers for in-depth data analysis for the sake of conducting health data collaboration projects. Since 2019, the HA Data Collaboration Lab has provided data to over 200 researchers in 60 collaboration projects, and launched the Self-service Data Platform to support further exploration and innovation with healthcare data by local researchers.

