

## SFH meets with WHO Regional Director for Western Pacific (with photos)

The Secretary for Food and Health, Professor Sophia Chan, today (May 2) met with the World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Director for the Western Pacific, Dr Takeshi Kasai, during his visit to Hong Kong.

Welcoming Dr Kasai's visit to Hong Kong, Professor Chan said, "The Food and Health Bureau (FHB) of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) works in close collaboration with the WHO to protect and safeguard public health. We uphold and adopt public health principles promulgated by the WHO and implement a variety of health programmes for the prevention and control of communicable and non-communicable diseases (NCD), as well as other aspects including mental health, tobacco control, Chinese medicine and access to essential drugs.

"I had a fruitful exchange with Dr Kasai today and took the opportunity to share with him the latest developments in Hong Kong's healthcare policies, such as the development of primary healthcare and District Health Centre, strategy formulation and an action plan to prevent and control NCD, as well as cancer strategy. I also briefed him on our strategy for responding to the recent measles outbreak at Hong Kong International Airport. We will continue to work hand-in-hand with the WHO to take forward various health programmes."

Dr Kasai said, "It is a great pleasure to visit the HKSAR for the first time as the WHO Regional Director for the Western Pacific, to discuss health issues in Hong Kong as well as the shared challenges facing our region. The WHO greatly values its close working relationship with the Government of the HKSAR and its support for the WHO's work. I look forward to continuing to work with Professor Chan and other colleagues of the HKSAR Government, as together we face the challenges of the future."

Hong Kong was assigned to the WHO Western Pacific Region at the Sixth World Health Assembly in 1953. The FHB leads government delegations to attend the annual World Health Assembly and the WHO Regional Committee for the Western Pacific.

The HKSAR Government actively supports the work of the WHO. Since 2012, the Department of Health (DH) has been designated as the WHO Collaborating Centre for Traditional Medicine and the WHO Collaborating Centre for Smoking Cessation and Treatment of Tobacco Dependence. In addition, the Director of Health serves as a commissioner for the WHO Commission on Ending Childhood Obesity, which advises on approaches and combinations of interventions for tackling childhood and adolescent obesity in different contexts around the world. From time to time, the HKSAR Government co-organises international meetings with the WHO to discuss public health matters with global implications.

