

Special visiting arrangement to resume in eight infirmary hospitals

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The Hospital Authority (HA) announced today (April 13) that the special visiting arrangement will resume in eight infirmary hospitals next Wednesday (April 21).

"Given the easing situation of the epidemic recently, the HA will resume the special visiting arrangement in phases. The initial phase covers eight infirmary hospitals (see details in the Appendix), where each patient will be allocated a one-hour visiting session by one designated relative every week. Ward staff will begin contacting patients' families in the next few days for scheduling the visits. The visiting quotas are subject to the actual operation of the individual wards. A change of visitor is not allowed within the one-hour session," the HA spokesperson said.

To minimise the infection risk for inpatients and staff, one-off visitors are required to present a negative COVID-19 nucleic acid test result obtained within 72 hours before the scheduled visit. Regular visitors can choose to conduct weekly testing. For visits arranged under urgent circumstances, the visitor must provide a test result within two days after the visit.

"As more citizens are getting vaccinated, visitors who have completed two-dose COVID-19 vaccination for at least 14 days can opt for rapid antigen testing within 24 hours before the visit. The visitors have to purchase the COVID-19 rapid antigen test and conduct it at home on their own. The visitors need to take a photo of the person being tested with the negative results and the time and date of the test. The photo, the packing and product insert of the rapid antigen test kit and the vaccination record need to be shown together to the ward staff for checking before entering the ward. For details, please browse the HA webpage," the spokesperson said.

To further safeguard the safety of patients and healthcare workers, visitors entering public hospitals are required to comply with the infection control measures, such as wearing surgical masks, temperature checking and filling in health declaration forms.

"Visitors can scan the Hospital Visit QR code and fill in the health declaration form within 24 hours before the visit and show the QR code generated by the system to the ward staff. The updated version of the Hospital Visit QR code will be displayed on the HA website and in the mobile app 'HA Go'.

"Both the HA Central Command Committee and the HA Central Committee on Infectious Disease and Emergency Responses have decided to resume the special

visiting arrangement following prudent deliberation and assessment. The arrangement will be reviewed with due consideration to the latest epidemic situation and will be further extended to other hospitals and wards if the situation allows," the spokesperson added.

The HA hopes the community can understand that visiting arrangements can only be made with certain restrictions under the current epidemic situation. Meanwhile, other hospitals and wards will continue to facilitate compassionate visiting arrangements and video visiting as far as practicable. In addition, visitors are encouraged to scan the "LeaveHomeSafe" venue QR code displayed at all public hospitals for complete personal records of their visits. â€‹