

Specialist outpatient services receive positive rating from nearly 90 per cent of respondents in patient survey

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The Hospital Authority (HA) Board today (December 19) discussed and endorsed the Report of the 2018 Patient Experience Survey on Specialist Outpatient Service. The Survey revealed that the proportion of respondents who gave a positive rating for their overall specialist outpatient experience had increased to nearly 90 per cent, as compared with the data of a similar survey conducted in 2014. The Survey results will help the HA better understand the needs of the patients and further enhance its service quality.

The Jockey Club School of Public Health and Primary Care of the Faculty of Medicine of the Chinese University of Hong Kong (JCSPHPC) was commissioned by the HA to conduct the Survey from July 2018 to March 2019. Around 14 000 randomly selected patients attending 26 selected Specialist Outpatient Clinics (SOPCs) were interviewed by phone. The Survey examined the core dimensions of patient care, covering the patient journey from before appointment to leaving the clinic.

The Principal Investigator of the Survey, Professor Eliza Wong of the JCSPHPC, said that the overall response rate of the Survey was 78 per cent. The findings revealed an overall positive experience in specialist outpatient services with around 90 per cent of the respondents rating 7 or above (along a scoring scale of 0 to 10). The mean score of the overall experience across the 26 SOPCs was 7.9. The patient experience was also similar across the 26 SOPCs. A similar survey of around 14 000 patients conducted in 2014 found that 84 per cent of the respondents rated the overall experience as positive with the mean score being 7.7.

The majority of the respondents gave high ratings towards multiple care aspects including "doctors providing clear and understandable answers to important questions", "confidence and trust in doctors", "provision of clear and understandable information on how to take medication and their purposes", "enough information given to patients' family members" and "being treated with respect and dignity".

"Areas with relatively low scores included 'choice of appointment time and information on waiting time', 'provision of post-discharge information on danger signals and contact' and 'posters about hand sanitation in SOPCs'," Professor Wong added.

The HA Director (Quality and Safety), Dr Chung Kin-lai, said, "The HA realises patients' expectations of the services of SOPCs but also hopes that patients could understand the HA is facing tremendous demand in public

hospital services. The HA will study the findings of the Survey in detail to continuously improve the quality of specialist outpatient services, for example, by exploring how to provide patients with more post-discharge information on self-care. Moreover, the HA is developing a Queue Management System through which patients could know the queuing time required for consultation." He said he was deeply grateful to patients for their support and positive ratings in the Survey. He also expressed his gratitude to front-line staff for their efforts and contributions amidst the heavy workload in the SOPCs.

Dr Chung also said, "The HA will continue to carry out regular surveys to help map the service development direction and formulate improvement measures."

Members of the public are welcome to browse the full Report of the Survey, which can be accessed online under "Special Reports" in the "Corporate News" section of the HA website (www.ha.org.hk).