

19th round of computer ballot registration for submitting applications for Northbound Travel for Hong Kong Vehicles to open January 29 to February 1

The Transport Department today (January 28) reminded members of the public that the 19th round of computer ballot registration for submitting applications for Northbound Travel for Hong Kong Vehicles (the scheme) will be open from 10am tomorrow (January 29) to 11.59pm on February 1, and the ballot result will be announced on February 2.

Eligible applicants for the scheme can register for computer balloting through the designated website (www.hzmbqfs.gov.hk). Successful balloting applicants are required to submit applications for the scheme within the designated date and time randomly allocated by the computer system.

Employers and employees should take precautions during cold weather

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations:

Please broadcast the following special announcement immediately, and repeat it at frequent intervals when the Cold Weather Warning is in force:

The Labour Department reminds employers that as the Cold Weather Warning is in force, they should take appropriate precautions such as reminding employees who have to work outdoors or in remote areas to wear appropriately warm clothing, and make arrangements for employees to rotate from outdoor to indoor or sheltered work sites as far as possible. Employees should take note of the weather report, wear appropriately warm clothing and be mindful of their health conditions. They should notify their supervisors and seek medical help immediately if feeling unwell, such as having cold limbs and body shivering.

CHP reminds public on precautions against cold weather

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (January 28) reminded the public, particularly the elderly and people with chronic illnesses, to adopt appropriate measures to protect their health in view of the cold weather.

A spokesman for the CHP said that cold weather can easily trigger or exacerbate diseases, especially among the elderly and persons suffering from heart disease, respiratory illness or other chronic illnesses.

"Elderly people have less insulating fat beneath their skin to keep them warm and their body temperature control mechanism may be weaker. Their body may not be able to appropriately respond to the cold weather," the spokesman said.

Some senior persons may have decreased mobility, which can in turn impair their ability to generate and conserve body heat. Chronic illnesses, such as hypertension, diabetes and endocrine disorders may undermine the health of elderly people and lower their metabolic rate, subsequently causing their body to generate less heat. Persons with chronic illnesses such as chronic respiratory illnesses or heart disease are vulnerable to disease aggravation due to cold weather.

The CHP reminded the public, in particular the elderly and persons with chronic illnesses, to adopt the following preventive measures:

- Take note of the weather forecast. Wear warm clothing, including hats, scarves, gloves and socks accordingly;
- Consume sufficient food to ensure adequate calorie intake;
- Perform regular exercise to facilitate blood circulation and heat production;
- Stay in a warm environment and avoid prolonged outdoor exposure;
- Use heaters with care, and maintain adequate indoor ventilation; and
- Seek medical advice if feeling unwell.

In addition, the public should avoid alcoholic beverages.

"Drinking alcohol cannot keep you warm. Alcohol accelerates the loss of body heat through dilated blood vessels, resulting in chilling instead," the spokesman said.

"Parents should ensure that babies are sufficiently warm, but it is also important to keep babies relatively lightly clothed to avoid overheating them," the spokesman added.

Parents should observe the following safety measures when putting their children to bed:

- Keep the room well ventilated and at a comfortable temperature;
- Always place babies on their back to sleep. Leave their head, face and arms uncovered during sleep;
- Babies do not need pillows. Place babies on a firm and well-fitted mattress to sleep. Avoid soft objects, pillows and loose bedding;
- Let babies sleep in a cot placed in the parents' room and near their bed; and
- Maintain a smoke-free environment.

In addition, seasonal influenza vaccination is recommended for all persons aged 6 months or above except those with known contraindications. Persons at higher risk of getting influenza and its complications, including the elderly and children, should receive seasonal influenza vaccination early. Please see details of the vaccination schemes on the [CHP's website](#).

A person who gets influenza and COVID-19 at the same time may be more seriously ill and would have a higher risk of death. Influenza vaccination may reduce the likelihood of hospitalisation and the length of stay. It is important for elderly persons, especially those residing in residential care homes, to receive both seasonal influenza vaccination and COVID-19 vaccination. They should also receive an additional booster against COVID-19 according to recommendations as soon as possible. The public should also maintain good personal and environmental hygiene against respiratory illnesses and note the following:

- Surgical masks can prevent transmission of respiratory viruses from ill persons. It is essential for persons who are symptomatic (even if having mild symptoms) to wear a surgical mask;
- Wear a surgical mask when taking public transport or staying in crowded places. It is important to wear a mask properly, including performing hand hygiene before wearing and after removing a mask;
- Avoid touching one's eyes, mouth and nose;
- Wash hands with liquid soap and water properly whenever possibly contaminated;
- When hands are not visibly soiled, clean them with 70 to 80 per cent alcohol-based handrub;
- Cover the mouth and nose with tissue paper when sneezing or coughing. Dispose of soiled tissue paper properly into a lidded rubbish bin, and wash hands thoroughly afterwards;
- Maintain good indoor ventilation;
- When having respiratory symptoms, wear a surgical mask, refrain from work or attending classes at school, avoid going to crowded places and seek medical advice promptly; and
- Maintain a balanced diet, exercise regularly, take adequate rest, do not smoke and avoid overstress.

Food-borne diseases, particularly those linked to hot pot cuisine, are also common in cold weather. The following preventive measures should be

taken:

- Wash hands before handling and consuming food;
- Do not patronise unlicensed vendors or those with poor hygienic standards while selecting food;
- Wash and cook all food thoroughly;
- Vegetables should be washed thoroughly in clean running water before cooking and consumption. When appropriate, scrub vegetables with hard surfaces with a clean brush to remove dirt and substances, including pesticide residues and contaminants, from the surface and crevices;
- Shrimps should be fully cooked until the shells turn red and the flesh turns white and opaque;
- For shellfish such as scallops and geoduck, scrub the shells thoroughly and remove internal organs;
- Most hot pot ingredients should be stored in a refrigerator at 4 degrees Celsius or below, while frozen food should be stored in a freezer at -18 degrees C or below;
- Never use raw eggs as a dipping sauce for hot pot; and
- Use different sets of chopsticks to handle raw and cooked food to avoid cross-contamination.

In addition, when using fuel-burning appliances, especially in indoor areas, the public should ensure adequate ventilation to avoid harmful exposure to carbon monoxide (CO) and prevent CO poisoning.

For more health information, the public may call the DH's Health Education Infoline (2833 0111) or visit the [CHP's website](#) and [Facebook Fanpage](#).

The public may also call Dial-a-Weather (1878 200) or visit the [website of the Hong Kong Observatory](#) for the latest weather information and forecast, or its [page on Weather Information for Senior Citizens](#).

HAD opens temporary cold shelters

In view of the cold weather, the Home Affairs Department has opened 18 temporary cold shelters in various districts today (January 27) for people in need of the service. The temporary shelters will remain open when the Cold Weather Warning is in force.

Clean mattresses and blankets/quilts, hot meals and hot water will be provided to shelter users free of charge during the opening of temporary shelters.

To ensure that cold shelter users can rest in a quiet and undisturbed environment, members of the public or agencies wishing to make donations to

shelter users are requested to register with the staff of the shelter first. Donors will then be directed to place the donated items at a specified indoor location. The staff will help notify the shelter users to collect the items on their own.

Anyone seeking temporary refuge or with any questions about the donation arrangements at the cold shelters may call the department's hotline 2572 8427 for more information.

The 18 temporary cold shelters are located at:

Hong Kong Island:

Central and Western:

Sai Ying Pun Community Complex Community Hall
3/F, Sai Ying Pun Community Complex,
2 High Street, Sai Ying Pun

Eastern:

Causeway Bay Community Centre
3/F, 7 Fook Yum Road, Causeway Bay

Southern:

Lei Tung Community Hall
Lei Tung Estate, Ap Lei Chau

Wan Chai:

Wan Chai Activities Centre
LG/F, Wan Chai Market, 258 Queen's Road East, Wan Chai

Kowloon:

Kowloon City:

Hung Hom Community Hall
1/F, Kowloon City Government Offices,
42 Bailey Street, Hung Hom

Kwun Tong:

Lam Tin (West) Estate Community Centre
71 Kai Tin Road, Lam Tin

Sham Shui Po:

Nam Cheong District Community Centre
1 Cheong San Lane, Sham Shui Po

Wong Tai Sin:

Tsz Wan Shan (South) Estate Community Centre
45 Wan Wah Street, Tsz Wan Shan

Yau Tsim Mong:

Henry G Leong Yaumatei Community Centre

60 Public Square Street, Yau Ma Tei

New Territories:

Islands:

Tung Chung Community Hall

G/F, Tung Chung Municipal Services Building, 39 Man Tung Road, Tung Chung

Kwai Tsing:

Tai Wo Hau Estate Community Centre

15 Tai Wo Hau Road, Kwai Chung

North:

Cheung Wah Community Hall

Cheung Wah Estate, Fanling

Sai Kung:

Hang Hau Community Hall

G/F, Sai Kung Tseung Kwan O Government Complex,

38 Pui Shing Road, Hang Hau, Tseung Kwan O

Sha Tin:

Lung Hang Estate Community Centre

Lung Hang Estate, Sha Tin

Tai Po:

Tai Po Community Centre

2 Heung Sze Wui Street, Tai Po

Tsuen Wan:

Lei Muk Shue Community Hall

G/F, Hong Shue House, Lei Muk Shue Estate, Tsuen Wan

Tuen Mun:

Butterfly Bay Community Centre

Butterfly Estate (near Tip Sum House), Tuen Mun

Yuen Long:

Long Ping Community Hall

Long Ping Estate, Yuen Long

**US for Health reaches out to community
to expound on legislative work**

relating to advance medical directives and dying in place (with photos)

The Under Secretary for Health, Dr Libby Lee, attended a community talk on the Advance Decision on Life-sustaining Treatment Bill co-organised by the Health Bureau and the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust today (January 27). She expounded to members of the public on the Government's legislative work in relation to the advance medical directives (AMDs) and dying in place, and how the relevant policy initiatives can enhance patients' quality of life during their final days.

She spelt out the advantages of making advance medical directives for patients at their final stage and their family by sharing her personal experience.

"Despite my identity as a healthcare professional who has used to witness births and deaths, it was totally a different issue when it came to my own family. I was fortunate enough to have had discussions with my mother on her preferred end-of-life care arrangement before she passed away. By that, I was able to spend quality time with her during her precious last moments and bid final farewell to her in the way she wished.

"However, death is unpredictable. During my days as a practising doctor, I encountered many occasions on which the patients were unable to discuss in time with their loved ones on their preferred medical arrangements for their final days, and to treasure the last opportunities to communicate with them. That left their living family with much regret. In this regard, the Government is working on establishing legal frameworks for aspects such as AMDs and do-not-attempt cardiopulmonary resuscitation (DNACPR) orders for the sake of honouring patients' decisions and providing quality and holistic end-of-life care to the patients and their families."

The Bill covers mainly two parts, namely the AMDs and the DNACPR orders. An AMD maker who is mentally capable of deciding on a life-sustaining treatment can specify that upon meeting the specified precondition of the instruction stated in the AMD, no life-sustaining treatment specified in the instructions can be performed to him or her when he or she is mentally incapable of deciding on a life-sustaining treatment. A DNACPR order is an instrument that directs not to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation on a person suffering from cardiopulmonary arrest. The making of both AMDs and DNACPR orders will adhere to the principle of "cautious making, easy revoking". At the time of making, an AMD requires the presence of no less than two witnesses who must satisfy certain conditions (including, to the best of his/her knowledge, not being a beneficiary of the maker's estate, etc) with one of the witnesses being a registered medical practitioner (RMP) while the DNACPR order must be made by two RMPs (one of whom must be a specialist). In either case, the maker can revoke at any time by verbal/written means or destroying the AMD/DNACPR order as long as he or she is mentally capable to do so.

Furthermore, the Government suggests amending the relevant provisions in the Coroners Ordinance (Cap. 504) and the Births and Deaths Registration Ordinance (Cap. 174). Upon amendment, if a resident who passed away in a residential care home was diagnosed as having a terminal illness when he or she was alive and was attended to by an RMP within 14 days before passing away, and his or her certificate of cause of death states that he or she died of a natural cause, such a death case will no longer be considered as a reportable death to the Coroners Court.

Details can be found in a [press release](#) issued earlier.

The legislative proposal was submitted to the Legislative Council (LegCo) last December. The Health Bureau is in the process of scrutinising the provisions with the LegCo Bills Committee.

The Deputy Secretary for Health Mr Eddie Lee also attended the community talk today. He introduced to the audiences the background of the legislative work, the key provisions and relevant arrangements. Mr Lee stressed that the Government would continue to enhance the supporting measures, in particular the promotion of communication among the patients, their families and medical professionals on the advanced care plan for end-of-life care. He also answered questions from the floor together with the Consultant of the Clinical Oncology Department of the Pamela Youde Nethersole Eastern Hospital, Dr Rebecca Yeung, during the interactive session.

Today's community talk is the first of the series, attracting some 140 members of the public. The remaining five community talks will be held at different locations across Hong Kong Island, Kowloon and the New Territories from February to April. The Government hopes to keep up with the explanatory work by reaching out to the community, thus enabling all in the society to get a better grasp of the legislative work relating to the Bill and dying in place, and promoting the end-of-life care and life and death education in the community.

Citizens who wish to join the community talks on the Advance Decision on Life-sustaining Treatment Bill may sign up via the website foss.hku.hk/jcecc/zh/adltb-2/ (webpage in Chinese only).



