

DH announces key findings of annual health assessment of Student Health Service

The Department of Health (DH) today (January 3) announced the key findings of the annual health assessment service of the DH's Student Health Service (SHS) in the 2022/23 school year and appealed to primary and secondary school students to enrol for the annual health assessment service in the 2023/24 school year.

The DH's SHS provides free annual health assessment service for eligible primary and secondary school students with the aim of identifying students with health problems at an early stage for timely advice and intervention. Students were provided with a series of health services designed to cater for their health needs at various stages of their development, including physical examinations; screenings for health problems related to growth, nutrition, vision, hearing, scoliosis, psychosocial health and behaviour; individual counselling; health education and vaccination. Students found to have health problems will be referred to Special Assessment Centre (SAC) under the Student Health Service, specialist clinics of the Hospital Authority, or other appropriate organisations for further assessment or management.

A total of 233 000 primary students and 97 000 secondary students attended the Student Health Service Centres (SHSCs) for annual health assessment services in the 2022/23 school year. The main findings requiring attention are summarised in the ensuing paragraphs.

The annual health assessment revealed a deterioration of students' vision in recent years, especially among lower grade primary students. The percentage of Primary One students who wore corrective lenses remained stable at 11 per cent from the 2015/16 school year to 2019/20, but increased to 15 per cent in 2020/21 and remained level till 2022/23. The overall percentage of primary and secondary school students who required a referral to the optometry service of the SHS for further visual assessment, including those who failed the preliminary visual acuity test, also increased from 9.4 per cent in 2018/19 to 16.7 per cent in 2020/21, followed by a slight drop to 13 per cent in 2022/23.

The data also revealed that the detection rates of being overweight (including obesity) among primary and secondary school students remained elevated in 2022/23. Prior to the COVID-19 epidemic, the rates among the two groups of students were about 17.4 per cent and 19.9 per cent respectively for the 2018/19 school year. The detection rates increased to 20.6 per cent and 22.1 per cent in 2021/22 and slightly dropped to 19.5 per cent and 20.5 per cent respectively in 2022/23. During the COVID-19 epidemic, class suspension, online classes, decreased outdoor physical activity, together with increased screen time, all imposed higher risks of overweight/obesity

and deteriorated vision. To prevent childhood and adolescent obesity developing into a lifelong threat to health, the SHS encourages students to develop healthy living and eating habits by engaging in at least one hour of a moderate-to-vigorous intensity of physical activity daily and maintaining a healthy balanced diet. For students who require more support on weight management, dietitians of the SACs also provide individualised dietary advice to students upon referral of the SHSCs.

The health assessment of the SHSCs also revealed that the percentage of students requiring a referral to the SAC, specialist clinics or other organisations for psychosocial and behavioural problems had increased from 1.1 per cent in the 2018/19 school year to 1.8 per cent in 2022/23. The self-administered questionnaire collected from students attending the SHSCs in the 2022/23 school year found that 2.8 per cent and 1.3 per cent of all students had planned to commit suicide or attempted suicide in the past 12 months respectively, with a higher percentage among secondary students (3.7 per cent and 1.6 per cent respectively). Healthcare professionals including doctors, nurses, clinical psychologists in the SHSCs and SACs have paid additional attention to students' emotions and mental health needs, and provided individual health counselling and advice to students. In the 2022/23 school year, the Adolescent Health Programme team of the SHS visited 279 secondary schools in the form of an outreaching service to promote psychosocial and mental well-being of students, helping them to build basic life skills and resilience to life stresses. Information and tips on psychosocial and mental health have been uploaded to the SHS website for students, parents and teachers' reference. Furthermore, the Government has set up the 18111 – Mental Health Support Hotline to provide one-stop, round-the-clock support for people with mental health needs, rendering them immediate mental health support and referral services. In addition, the Government has also implemented the Three-Tier School-based Emergency Mechanism to ensure early identification of and support for students at high risk and provide timely assistance and seek professional counselling or treatment services for them.

A spokesman for the DH said that the SHS aims to safeguard both the physical and psychological health of students through health promotion and disease prevention services, enabling them to gain the maximum benefit from the education system and develop their full potential. While some student annual health assessment services were earlier suspended due to the COVID-19 epidemic, 12 SHSCs have resumed annual health assessment services for all grades of primary and secondary students during the school year 2023/24. The spokesman again urged students to enrol in the annual health assessment service.

Enrolment is now open for the annual health assessment service of the 2023/24 school year. Students who have not yet enrolled are encouraged to enrol through their school or enrol directly with the SHSCs. The enrolment form and relevant information are available at the [SHS web page](#).

For latest information on the SHS, please visit www.studenthealth.gov.hk/eindex.html.

Labour Department to hold webinar on Employment Ordinance

The Labour Department has called for registration for a webinar on the Employment Ordinance to be held between 3pm and 5pm on February 2 (Friday).

The main provisions of the Employment Ordinance will be introduced.

The real-time webinar will be conducted in Cantonese via Zoom and participation is free of charge.

Interested participants should complete the registration form, which can be downloaded from the Labour Department's website (www.labour.gov.hk), and return it by email by January 17 (Wednesday). The quota will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. For enquiries, please call 3575 8671.

Property owner fined over \$120,000 for not complying with removal order

A property owner who failed to comply with a removal order issued under the Buildings Ordinance (BO) (Cap. 123) was convicted and fined over \$120,000 at the Tuen Mun Magistrates' Courts last week.

The case involved a five-storey unauthorised village house at Fan Tin Tsuen, San Tin, Yuen Long. Since the Lands Department would not issue a certificate of exemption for the building, it is not a New Territories Exempted House under the Buildings Ordinance (Application to the New Territories) Ordinance (Cap. 121). As the related unauthorised building works (UBWs) were carried out without the prior approval and consent from the Buildings Department (BD), a removal order was served on the owner under section 24(1) of the BO.

Failing to comply with the removal order, the owner was prosecuted by the BD and was fined \$123,680 upon conviction at the Tuen Mun Magistrates' Courts on December 29, 2023.

A spokesman for the BD said today (January 3), "UBWs may lead to serious consequences. Owners must comply with removal orders without delay. The BD will continue to take enforcement action against owners who have failed to comply with removal orders, including instigation of prosecution, so as to

ensure building safety."

Failure to comply with a removal order without reasonable excuse is a serious offence under the BO. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$200,000 and one year's imprisonment, and a further fine of \$20,000 for each day that the offence continues.

Red flags hoisted at Silverstrand Beach and Clear Water Bay Second Beach

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible:

Here is an item of interest to swimmers.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (January 3) that due to big waves, red flags have been hoisted at Silverstrand Beach and Clear Water Bay Second Beach in Sai Kung District. Beachgoers are advised not to swim at these beaches.

Auction of traditional vehicle registration marks to be held on January 20

The Transport Department (TD) today (January 3) announced that the auction of traditional vehicle registration marks will be held on January 20 (Saturday) in Meeting Room N101, L1, New Wing, Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre, Wan Chai.

"A total of 350 vehicle registration marks will be put up for public auction. The list of marks has been uploaded to the department's website, www.td.gov.hk/en/public_services/vehicle_registration_mark/index.html," a department spokesman said.

Applicants who have paid a deposit of \$1,000 to reserve a mark for auction should also participate in the bidding (including the first bid at the reserve price of \$1,000). Otherwise, the mark concerned may be sold to another bidder at the reserve price.

People who wish to participate in the bidding at the auction should take note of the following important points:

(1) Successful bidders are required to produce the following documents for completion of registration and payment procedures immediately after the successful bidding:

(i) the identity document of the successful bidder;

(ii) the identity document of the purchaser if it is different from the successful bidder;

(iii) a copy of the Certificate of Incorporation if the purchaser is a body corporate; and

(iv) a crossed cheque made payable to "The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region" or "The Government of the HKSAR". (For an auctioned mark paid for by cheque, the first three working days after the date of auction will be required for cheque clearance confirmation before processing of the application for mark assignment can be completed.)

Successful bidders can also pay through the Easy Pay System (EPS). Payment by post-dated cheques, cash or other methods will not be accepted.

(2) Purchasers must make payment of the purchase price through EPS or by crossed cheque and complete the Memorandum of Sale of Registration Mark immediately after the bidding. Subsequent alteration of the particulars in the memorandum will not be permitted.

(3) A vehicle registration mark can only be assigned to a motor vehicle which is registered in the name of the purchaser. The Certificate of Incorporation must be produced immediately by the purchaser if a vehicle registration mark purchased is to be registered under the name of a body corporate.

(4) Special registration marks are non-transferable. Where the ownership of a motor vehicle with a special registration mark is transferred, the allocation of the special registration mark shall be cancelled.

(5) The purchaser shall, within 12 months after the date of auction, apply to the Commissioner for Transport for the registration mark to be assigned to a motor vehicle registered in the name of the purchaser. If the purchaser fails to assign the registration mark within 12 months, allocation of the mark will be cancelled and arranged for reallocation in accordance with the statutory provision without prior notice to the purchaser.

For other auction details, please refer to the Guidance Notes – Auction of Traditional Vehicle Registration Marks, which can be downloaded from the department's website,

www.td.gov.hk/en/public_services/vehicle_registration_mark/tvrm_auction/index.html.