

Pilot Alcohol Cessation Counselling Service subvented by DH commences

The Department of Health (DH) today (April 8) said that a DH-subvented programme, namely the Pilot Alcohol Cessation Counselling Service (the Pilot Programme) run by the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals (TWGHs), was launched today. The Pilot Programme will provide free counselling service for people identified to have probable alcohol dependence.

Under the two-year Pilot Programme, Hong Kong residents identified as having probable alcohol dependence, defined by scoring 20 or above at the [Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test](#) (AUDIT), are eligible to receive the counselling service free of charge. Delivered by counsellors of the TWGHs, the service comprises three components, namely initial assessment, evidence-based individual counselling intervention, and subsequent evaluation follow-up.

Information of the Pilot Programme has been uploaded to the DH's [Change for Health](#) website. Eligible persons who are interested to join the Pilot Programme can call the enquiry hotline of the TWGHs (2884 9876) or visit their webpage (atp.tungwahcsd.org/DH_Alcohol/DH_Alcohol.pdf) for more details on enrolment method and service centre. The Pilot Programme also accepts medical and social service units in the community to refer cases in need to the counselling service. The DH and TWGHs will closely monitor the usage of the Pilot Programme. Further modes of cooperation with District Health Centres will also be explored in the future.

According to the information of the World Health Organization, the harmful use of alcohol is a causal risk factor in more than 200 diseases, injuries and other health conditions. The harmful use of alcohol is associated with a risk of developing health problems such as mental and behavioural disorders (including alcohol dependence), as well as major non-communicable diseases (such as liver cirrhosis and some cancers). Beyond health consequences, the harmful use of alcohol brings significant social burdens to individuals, families and society at large.

The Population Health Survey 2020-22 of the DH showed that the proportion of persons aged 15 or above with probable alcohol dependence (AUDIT score 20 or above) was 0.1 per cent (estimated 5 700 persons) in the 12 months preceding the survey. For consequences of alcohol use, findings showed that among those with AUDIT score 20 or above, 13.2 per cent reported having family or marital problems, while 26.7 per cent reported having job or work problems due to drinking.

A spokesman for the DH reminded that the most effective means to reduce the risk of alcohol-related harms is to avoid alcohol consumption. Alcohol drinkers are advised to appraise their drinking habits and appreciate the health benefits of cutting down or even stopping alcohol consumption completely. The Change for Health website of the DH has provided the

electronic alcohol screening and brief intervention (e-SBI) tool for drinkers to assess their own drinking risk and obtain brief health advice. Persons who are assessed to have harmful drinking or suspected to have alcohol dependence are advised to seek professional help.

For more information on the harmful effects of alcohol and changing drinking habits, please visit the Change for Health website of the DH at www.change4health.gov.hk/en/alcohol_aware/index.html.

Hong Kong Customs seizes suspected heroin worth about \$5.7 million at airport (with photo)

Hong Kong Customs yesterday (April 7) detected a drug trafficking case involving baggage concealment at Hong Kong International Airport and seized about 7.6 kilograms of suspected heroin with an estimated market value of about \$5.7 million.

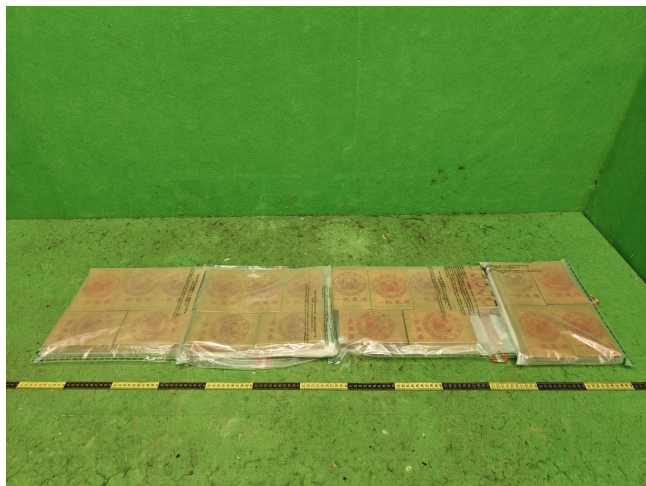
A 23-year-old female passenger arrived in Hong Kong from Bangkok, Thailand, yesterday. During Customs clearance, the batch of suspected heroin was found in eight food-packaging boxes inside her check-in suitcase. The female was subsequently arrested.

The arrested woman has been charged with one count of trafficking in a dangerous drug. The case will be brought up at the West Kowloon Magistrates' Courts tomorrow (April 9).

Following the resumption of normal travel and exchanges with the Mainland and other parts of the world, the number of visitors to Hong Kong has also been increasing steadily. Customs will continue to apply a risk assessment approach and focus on selecting passengers from high-risk regions for clearance to combat transnational drug trafficking activities.

Under the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance, trafficking in a dangerous drug is a serious offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$5 million and life imprisonment.

Members of the public may report any suspected drug trafficking activities to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk) or online form (eform.cefs.gov.hk/form/ced002/).



[Lands Department issues five pre-sale consents in first quarter of 2024](#)

The Lands Department (LandsD) announced today (April 8) that four pre-sale consents for residential developments involving 1 365 residential units and one pre-sale consent for non-residential development were issued in the first quarter of 2024.

Details of the above residential developments (two of which being phased developments) with pre-sale consents issued are as follows:

Expected year of completion	Developments
2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• One development in Sham Shui Po (198 units)• One phase of a development in Tseung Kwan O (650 units)
2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• One phase of a development in Tai Po (403 units)• One development in Tai Hang (114 units)

The LandsD also issued one pre-sale consent for non-residential development in the first quarter. In addition, three consents to assign were issued, involving a total of 976 residential units in two phased developments in Tai Po and Tuen Mun respectively, as well as the hotel portion of a development in Kai Tak.

As at March 31, 2024, 25 applications for pre-sale consent for residential developments involving 14 019 residential units were being processed. Details are as follows:

Expected year of completion	No. of applications	No. of residential units involved
2024	7	431
2025	10	5 918
2026	7	7 213
2027	1	457

In addition, one application for consent to assign involving 1 658 residential units and two applications for pre-sale consent for non-residential developments were being processed.

Members of the public can obtain up-to-date information on consents issued for the past quarter and cases pending approval by visiting the LandsD website (www.landsd.gov.hk).

Intending purchasers are advised to study carefully the details of the development and the sale procedures, through information available from public advertisements, sales brochures and price lists released by the developer, before making a deposit for purchase. The sales brochure for a development also contains a summary of the provisions of the Deed of Mutual Covenant, including information on the common parts, the number of undivided shares assigned to each unit, the term of years for which the manager is appointed, the basis on which the management expenses are shared among the owners of the units, as well as a summary of the provisions of the government land grant, which intending purchasers are recommended to read carefully.

[Update on cluster of Influenza A cases at Kwai Chung Hospital](#)

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority.

Regarding an earlier announcement on a cluster of patients infected with Influenza A in a female psychiatric ward, the spokesperson for Kwai Chung Hospital made the following update today (April 8):

Two more patients (aged 19 and 62) in the ward have presented with symptoms of fever. Appropriate viral tests had been arranged for the patients and their test results were positive for Influenza A. The patients concerned are being treated in isolation and are in stable condition.

Admission and visiting arrangements to the ward concerned have been suspended. Infection control measures have already been stepped up according to established guidelines. The hospital will continue to closely monitor the

conditions of the patients in the ward concerned.

The cases have been reported to the Hospital Authority Head Office and the Centre for Health Protection for necessary follow-up.

[Appeal for information on missing man in Lantau North \(with photo\)](#)

Police today (April 8) appealed to the public for information on a man who went missing in Lantau North.

So Yuk-wah, aged 59, went missing after he left his residence in Yat Tung Estate yesterday (April 7) morning. His family member made a report to Police on the same day.

He is about 1.78 metres tall, around 85 kilograms in weight and of fat build. He has a square face with yellow complexion and short black and white hair. He was last seen wearing a light blue short-sleeved shirt, blue denim trousers, slippers and carrying a black backpack.

Anyone who knows the whereabouts of the missing man or may have seen him is urged to contact the Regional Missing Person Unit of New Territories South on 3661 1174 or 6383 4337 or email to rmpu-nts-2@police.gov.hk, or contact any police station.

