

Secretary for Health chairs ninth meeting of High Level Steering Committee on Antimicrobial Resistance (with photos)

The Secretary for Health, Professor Lo Chung-mau, convened the ninth meeting of the High Level Steering Committee on Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) today (July 11) to review the implementation of the Hong Kong Strategy and Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance (2023-2027) and discuss the response strategies with relevant government departments and organisations.

Professor Lo said, "AMR is considered as one of the greatest threats to global health and economies. In this connection, the Government has long been attaching great importance to the necessity of tackling the issue of AMR. As inter-sectoral collaboration and communication across the community are crucial to mitigating such a threat, the Government has been rallying cross-sectoral co-ordination and co-operation of relevant government departments as well as organisations under the 'One Health' framework to implement various aspects of the Action Plan over the past few years."

Based on the initiatives laid down in the Action Plan, a series of actions against AMR have been taken. These include considering legislative amendments to mandate the recording of antimicrobial prescriptions and dispensing through electronic means, making use of information technology to strengthen antibiotic stewardship in public hospitals, enhancing surveillance and dissemination of AMR data in ready-to-eat food, implementing the "veterinary prescription-only medication supply" policy in local food animal farms, organising publicity campaigns to raise public awareness of the threat of AMR, and strengthening collaboration and partnerships among different stakeholders.

At today's meeting, the Steering Committee reviewed the progress of the actions taken according to the Action Plan and evaluated the latest local situation of AMR by analysing the relevant surveillance data from various sectors, namely human, animal and food. The data thereof showed that the wholesale supply of antimicrobials to community pharmacies continually dropped from 18.5 per cent in 2016 to 4.1 per cent last year. Moreover, out of the total antimicrobial supply in Hong Kong, the proportion of the antimicrobials under the "Access" classification of the World Health Organization (WHO) (i.e. those less likely to result in resistance) reached 60.2 per cent last year, thus achieving the target as advocated by the WHO.

The Hospital Authority (HA) has been promoting the prudent use of antimicrobials through its Antibiotic Stewardship Programme (ASP), playing a crucial role in the fight against AMR. The HA introduced an electronic platform known as "Smart ASP" this year to leverage data analytics to assess the appropriateness of antibiotic prescriptions. The platform also prompts

clinicians to review prescriptions if necessary. Furthermore, the HA closely monitors antibiotic consumption trends and AMR patterns. Among all, Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) and Carbapenem-resistant Acinetobacter (CRA) showed a notable reduction by 3.0 and 8.9 percentage points respectively in 2023 compared with 2022. The HA remains committed to enhancing infection control measures and conducting routine audits to safeguard patient safety and combat AMR.

In terms of food safety, the Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department reminds the food trade and the public that raw or undercooked food is high-risk as it may carry bacteria with AMR. High-risk individuals, such as pregnant women, young children, the elderly, and persons with weakened immune systems (e.g. patients with chronic diseases), should avoid consuming raw or undercooked food whenever possible. The CFS highlights that the most effective way to reduce bacteria with AMR in food is to observe the Five Keys to Food Safety in daily life, namely choose safe raw materials, keep hands and utensils clean, separate raw and cooked food, cook thoroughly, and keep food at safe temperatures.

The Government calls on different sectors to continue working closely together to cope with the challenges brought about by AMR. Healthcare professionals should follow the guidelines on the prudent use of antimicrobials, while patients should strictly adhere to doctors' instructions when taking antimicrobials and should not buy antimicrobials on their own at community pharmacies without a prescription.

For details on information about AMR, members of the public may visit the [thematic website](#) of the Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health.

Chaired by the Secretary for Health, the Steering Committee was set up in May 2016 to encourage collaboration, synergy and cross-fertilisation among all professional sectors to jointly cope with the problems of AMR under the "One Health" framework. The Steering Committee comprises representatives from relevant government departments, public and private hospitals, healthcare organisations, academia and relevant professional bodies.



Hong Kong Customs further arrests two persons under unfair trade practice case involving rehabilitation institution

Hong Kong Customs conducted an enforcement action today (July 11) again and arrested two male directors of a rehabilitation institution. A staff member of the institution is suspected of having applied a false trade description to the service supplied, and of engaging in unfair trade practices involving a misleading omission, in contravention of the Trade Descriptions Ordinance (TDO). As of today, three male directors and a male staff member of the rehabilitation institution have been arrested.

Customs earlier received information alleging that a staff member of a rehabilitation institution falsely claimed to a customer that the prepaid book fees for a two-year training course could be refunded. However, the institution did not refund the fees to the customer in the end.

In addition, the staff member had claimed that the accommodation deposit paid by the customer would be refunded after his children completed the course. However, it was only after the institution had ceased to provide the training course that the staff member informed the customer of a material information, i.e. the deposit would not be refunded even if the course was discontinued.

After investigations, Customs officers today arrested two male directors, aged 44 and 64, of the rehabilitation institution. The two arrested persons have been released on bail pending further investigation.

An investigation is ongoing, and the possibility of other persons involved in the case being arrested is not ruled out.

Under the TDO, any trader who applies a false trade description to a service supplied or offered to be supplied to a consumer commits an offence. Any trader who engages in a commercial practice that omits or hides material information or provides material information in a manner that is unclear, unintelligible, ambiguous or untimely, and as a result causes, or is likely to cause, an average consumer to make a transactional decision, commits an offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$500,000 and imprisonment for five years.

Members of the public may report any suspected violations of the TDO 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/).

[HKMC appoints new Chief Executive Officer \(with photo\)](#)

The following is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority:

The Hong Kong Mortgage Corporation Limited (HKMC) announced today (July 11) that the Board of the HKMC has approved the appointment of Mr Colin Pou as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the HKMC with effect from December 26, 2024. Mr Pou will succeed Mr Raymond Li who will be retiring from the HKMC.

"The Board would like to thank Mr Li for his dedication and invaluable contribution to the Corporation in the past 11 years, in particular the successful launch of various new measures during his tenure, benefitting the society and the business community," said the Chairman of the HKMC, Mr Paul Chan. "I look forward to Mr Pou continuing to lead the healthy development of the Corporation after he takes up office, so as to serve the society and business community of Hong Kong," said Mr Chan.

Mr Pou is the Executive Director of the Financial Infrastructure Department at the Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA). He will be seconded from the HKMA to take up the CEO position of the HKMC. Mr Pou joined the HKMA in 1994 as an Assistant Manager and has worked in various departments at the HKMA covering areas of banking supervision, policy and development, monetary operations and payment systems. From November 2015 to October 2018, he was seconded to the HKMC as Senior Vice President (Operations) and CEO of the HKMC Insurance Limited, an HKMC's subsidiary. Mr Pou was promoted in October 2018 as Executive Director (Financial Infrastructure) of the HKMA, responsible for developing the financial market infrastructure and for enhancing the fintech ecosystem of Hong Kong.



Senior staff movements in Hong Kong Monetary Authority

The following is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority:

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) announced today (July 11) that the Senior Executive Director, Mr Raymond Li, who is currently on secondment to the Hong Kong Mortgage Corporation Limited (HKMC) as Chief Executive Officer (CEO), will be retiring with effect from December 26, 2024. The Executive Director (Financial Infrastructure), Mr Colin Pou, will be seconded to the HKMC to take over Mr Li's position on the same day.

The Chief Executive of the HKMA, Mr Eddie Yue, said, "Raymond has worked in the HKMA for over 30 years and served in many different roles. In his current role as the CEO of the HKMC, which he took up in 2013, Raymond has been dedicated to continued enhancement of the full range of services of the HKMC, particularly regarding retirement protection for the general public. Under his leadership, the HKMC has also provided strong support to the HKSAR Government in administering various loan guarantee schemes and helped many small and medium-sized enterprises and individuals tide over the difficult time during the pandemic. I would like to thank Raymond for his long and eminent service to the HKMA, and wish him a happy retirement in the many years to come."

The HKMA will arrange open recruitment for the post of Executive Director (Financial Infrastructure), and a separate announcement will be made after the completion of the selection process.

[Transcript of remarks by SLW after passage of Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse Bill \(with photo/video\)](#)

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Mr Chris Sun, after the passage of the Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse Bill by the Legislative Council this afternoon (July 11):

Reporter: Are there any future amendments such as longer prison term and how would the Government review the implementation of the new law in the future?

Secretary for Labour and Welfare: With the passage of the Mandatory Reporting Legislation today, we will soon publish it in the Gazette. The legislation will come into effect in 18 months upon its gazettal. We are going to make use of the coming 18 months to make sure that everything is ready, so that by the time the legislation comes into effect, all the professions who are required under the law to make mandatory reporting will get the necessary training, and also they are well equipped to make the reporting as necessary. Of course, with the passage of the law, we are also at the same time putting in place additional facilities and homes to cater for the increase in cases of reporting, and also we are going to step up our efforts in terms of promotions and publicity, and make sure we all work together for the welfare and betterment of our children.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)

