

Cross-Agency Steering Group and International Sustainability Standards Board members met in Hong Kong (with photo)

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

Members of the Green and Sustainable Finance Cross-Agency Steering Group (Steering Group) and the International Sustainability Standards Board (ISSB) met today (March 27) to discuss and promote sustainability disclosures by companies and financial institutions in Hong Kong.

The Steering Group and the ISSB held an industry roundtable with around 20 representatives from listed companies and different financial services sectors. Participants exchanged views on their experiences in and the unique circumstances for entities making sustainability disclosures in Hong Kong and Asia. They also explored the core elements of a local sustainability disclosures ecosystem that will require further support.

In the subsequent discussion between the Steering Group and the ISSB, they agreed to strengthen collaboration on developing comprehensive capacity building programmes. They also will maintain continued dialogue as Hong Kong furthers its commitment to align sustainability disclosures requirements with international standards (Note).

The Vice Chair of the ISSB, Mr Hua Jingdong, said, "Today's roundtable was an important opportunity to hear about and discuss Hong Kong's progress in developing a local sustainability disclosure ecosystem which includes adoption of the IFRS (International Financial Reporting Standards) Sustainability Disclosure Standards as a key element. The ISSB is committed to working closely with the industry and regulators in Hong Kong and the region more broadly to build capacity and drive more decision-useful sustainability-related financial disclosures."

The Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury, Mr Christopher Hui, said, "The Government has just issued a vision statement, setting out our aim to be among the first jurisdictions to align the local sustainability disclosure requirements with the IFRS Sustainability Disclosure Standards. This meeting with the ISSB and its Beijing Office has deepened mutual collaboration which is conducive to the long-term development of Hong Kong's sustainable disclosure ecosystem."

Co-Chair of the Steering Group and the Chief Executive Officer of the Securities and Futures Commission (SFC), Ms Julia Leung, said, "The Steering Group will build on existing initiatives to further promote data availability and develop sustainable finance talent and industry capabilities. These

elements are critical for Hong Kong's successful adoption of international sustainability reporting standards. We are delighted to advance this partnership with ISSB and its Beijing Office and will continue to engage with local and international stakeholders."

For details on the initiatives of the Steering Group and its members, please visit sustainablefinance.org.hk/en/.

About the Steering Group

Established in May 2020, the Steering Group is co-chaired by the Hong Kong Monetary Authority and the SFC. Members include the Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau, the Environment and Ecology Bureau, the Insurance Authority, the Mandatory Provident Fund Schemes Authority, the Accounting and Financial Reporting Council, and Hong Kong Exchanges and Clearing Limited. The Steering Group aims to co-ordinate the management of climate and environmental risks to the financial sector, accelerate the growth of green and sustainable finance in Hong Kong and support the Government's climate strategies.

Note: In the Policy Measures of the 2023 Policy Address, the Government [committed](#) to work with relevant financial regulators and stakeholders to develop a roadmap on the appropriate local adoption of the IFRS Sustainability Disclosure Standards to align with international standards.



[CHP investigates case of severe paediatric influenza A infection](#)

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (March 27) investigating a case of severe paediatric influenza A infection and reminded the community to heighten vigilance against influenza. The CHP appealed to members of the public to receive seasonal influenza vaccination (SIV) in a timely manner to better protect themselves during the influenza season.

The case involves a 7-year-old boy with good past health. He developed a fever and convulsions yesterday (March 26), and attended North District Hospital. He was arranged to be admitted to the paediatric intensive care unit of Prince of Wales Hospital for treatment on the same day. His respiratory specimen was positive for influenza A (H3) virus upon laboratory testing. The clinical diagnosis was influenza A infection complicated with pneumonia and shock. His condition improved after treatment and he is now in stable condition.

Initial enquiries by the CHP revealed that the patient had not received SIV for this season and had no travel history during the incubation period. His home contacts are currently asymptomatic. The CHP's investigations are ongoing.

A spokesman for the CHP said, "Influenza can cause serious illnesses in high-risk individuals and even healthy persons. SIV is one of the most effective means to prevent seasonal influenza and its complications, as well as reducing influenza-related hospitalisation and death. SIV 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 SIV early. As it takes about two weeks to develop antibodies, members of the public are advised to receive SIV early for protection against seasonal influenza. 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. It is important to receive both SIV and COVID-19 vaccination as soon as possible, in particular for children and elderly persons residing in the community or residential care homes. The public should also maintain good personal and environmental hygiene against influenza and other 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;
- For high-risk persons (e.g. persons with underlying medical conditions or persons who are immunocompromised), wear a surgical mask when visiting public places. The public should also 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, perform physical activity regularly, take adequate rest, do not smoke and avoid overstress.

The public may visit the CHP's [influenza page](#) and weekly [COVID-19 & Flu Express](#) for more information.

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Education Bureau alerts public to fraudulent WhatsApp message

The Education Bureau (EDB) today (March 27) called on the public to stay vigilant against a fraudulent WhatsApp message that falsely claims to be issued by school personnel. The message requested parents to transfer a tuition fee to apply for the Gifted Education Fund: Off-school Advanced Learning Programmes. The EDB has reported the case to the Police.

The EDB solemnly clarifies that all Gifted Education Fund: Off-school Advanced Learning Programmes for primary and secondary school students are free of charge and must be registered through the programme providers designated by the EDB. For details, please visit the EDB website (edb.gov.hk/en/curriculum-development/curriculum-area/gifted/ge_fund/gef/programme/current.html).

Members of the public should stay alert to suspicious messages and not disclose any personal information or transfer any fee. Anyone who has been scammed should contact the Police immediately. For enquiries, please call the EDB at 3698 3486.