

[SCST meets with Singapore's Minister for Culture, Community and Youth & Second Minister for Law \(with photos\)](#)

â€‹The Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism, Mr Kevin Yeung, today (March 27) met with Singapore's Minister for Culture, Community and Youth & Second Minister for Law, Mr Edwin Tong. Mr Yeung briefed Mr Tong on the latest developments of Hong Kong's cultural and sports policies. They also shared experiences on promoting culture and supporting sports, and explored opportunities of collaborations and exchanges.

Mr Yeung said, "Hong Kong has always strived to set up a platform for international cultural exchanges and has been maintaining frequent cultural exchanges with Singapore. This year for the first time, the Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau launched "Art March" as a brand to promote multiple mega arts and cultural events organised, funded, or supported by the Government, making use of our blend of Eastern and Western cultures and extensive international network to showcase to the world the unique charm and diverse characteristics of Chinese culture in Hong Kong. We look forward to establishing closer collaborations with Singapore and boosting cultural exchanges between the two places."



[HKMA Quarterly Bulletin and Half-Yearly Monetary and Financial Stability Report \(March 2024 Issue\)](#)

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

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) today (March 27) published the March 2024 issue of its Quarterly Bulletin and Half-Yearly Monetary and Financial Stability Report.

The Quarterly Bulletin carries two feature articles entitled "The Hong Kong Bond Market in 2023" and "The Faster Payment System: A Five-Year Journey of Innovation and Growth" respectively. The Half-Yearly Report provides detailed analyses of the global and local economy, as well as the monetary and financial conditions in Hong Kong. It also examines the recent performance and risks of the local banking sector.

The Quarterly Bulletin and the Half-Yearly Report can be viewed on and downloaded from the [HKMA website](#).

Fraudulent website related to Bank of Singapore Limited

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

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) wishes to alert members of the public to a press release issued by Bank of Singapore Limited relating to a fraudulent website, which has been reported to the HKMA. A hyperlink to the press release is available on the [HKMA website](#).

The HKMA wishes to remind the public that banks will not send SMS or emails with embedded hyperlinks which direct them to the banks' websites to carry out transactions. They will not ask customers for sensitive personal information, such as login passwords or one-time password, by phone, email or SMS (including via embedded hyperlinks).

Anyone who has provided his or her personal information, or who has conducted any financial transactions, through or in response to the website, should contact the bank using the contact information provided in the press release, and report the matter to the Police by contacting the Crime Wing Information Centre of the Hong Kong Police Force at 2860 5012.

LCQ13: Alzheimer's disease

Following is a question by the Hon Elizabeth Quat and a written reply by the Secretary for Health, Professor Lo Chung-mau, in the Legislative Council

today (March 27):

Question:

There are views that with the worsening of population ageing in Hong Kong, the number of patients with dementia (especially Alzheimer's disease (AD)) may continue to increase. In addition, some surveys conducted in recent years have pointed out that there is a downward trend of AD patients' ages, and early screening can effectively prevent and delay the disease, help patients maintain a healthy life as well as effectively reduce the burden on patients' families and the resources invested by society. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the number of confirmed AD patients in Hong Kong in the past five years, with a breakdown by age group and gender; the percentages of the numbers of AD patients in different age groups in their respective populations;
- (2) whether it has compiled statistics on the medical expenses incurred by the Government on the provision of services such as treatment and nursing care to each AD patient on average each year; if so, of a breakdown by expenditure item;
- (3) given that the current means of diagnosing AD include clinical trial and observation, conducting magnetic resonance imaging and harvesting bone marrow for testing, and it is learnt that a local research team has successfully developed a simple and effective blood test technology that can accurately detect early-stage AD, whether the Government will study the inclusion of such blood test in the scope of routine testing of public hospitals to shorten the time required for diagnosing AD;
- (4) as there are views that the general public do not have sufficient awareness of AD and are prone to mistake the relevant symptoms as mere normal ageing phenomena and ignore them, resulting in patients missing the timing for early treatment, of the Government's plans to step up publicity and education to strengthen public awareness of AD; and
- (5) of the measures in place to step up efforts to promote AD-related work on testing, scientific research on drugs and the transformation of scientific research achievements, as well as the details of such measures?

Reply:

President,

The reply to the question raised by the Hon Elizabeth Quat is as follows:

(1) Alzheimer's disease belongs to the spectrum of dementia which covers various types of diseases. The Hospital Authority (HA)'s healthcare professional team assesses the conditions and needs of all dementia patients with a multi-disciplinary approach, and provides necessary pharmacological and non-pharmacological treatment and follow-up to patients as appropriate to

slow down the process of brain degeneration and alleviate the symptoms. The HA collects statistics on the number of dementia patients based on their inpatient and out-patient disease codes and medication records. As the same type of drug can be used on patients with different types of dementia (including Alzheimer's disease), and the complexity and diversity of diagnosis as well as management of Alzheimer's disease requires long-term clinical follow-up on cases and professional judgment, the HA system currently maintains the overall number of patients with dementia and is not able to provide an accurate breakdown on the number of patients with Alzheimer's disease.

The number of patients with dementia receiving treatment in the HA in the past five years, with breakdown by age group and gender, is at Annex 1.

(2) Dementia patients commonly suffer from multiple chronic diseases such as hypertension, diabetes mellitus, cardiovascular diseases, as well as physical deterioration such as memory loss, falls, and continence problem. To flexibly deploy resources, the HA will refer patients to different specialist out-patient clinics of the HA, including medicine, geriatric, psychogeriatric and memory clinic, according to their needs, allowing patients to receive joint consultation and treatment. For example, the geriatric team simultaneously provides services to patients with dementia, including Alzheimer's disease, who are also suffering from other geriatric conditions, while the psychogeriatric team is responsible for supporting dementia patients with severe behavioural and psychological symptoms of dementia. As patients with dementia, including Alzheimer's disease, often require services from different specialist out-patient clinics, the healthcare expenditure arising from the provision of treatment and care services to such patients cannot be separately quantified. The cost incurred for the medical services provided by the HA to patients aged 65 or above in the past three years is at Annex 2.

(3) Dementia, including Alzheimer's disease, is a disease caused by a decline in brain function due to neurological changes. Since the loss of brain function is irreversible, early pharmacological and non-pharmacological support (e.g. reminiscence, multi-sensory and cognitive training, etc) can slow down the process of brain degeneration and alleviate the symptoms.

The HA provides laboratory testing services to support clinical diagnosis and monitoring of various diseases by various clinical specialties. When introducing new laboratory testing services, the HA will consider relevant factors such as clinical benefits, the safety and efficacy of the new technology, the availability of manpower and expertise, the capacity and technical adaptability of the laboratory. The HA is exploring the feasibility of introducing the relevant blood test and will consider introducing the laboratory testing service through the established mechanism in due course.

(4) The Government spares no effort in the promotion and public education of Alzheimer's disease towards the public. The Department of Health has all along been committed to the publicity and education of dementia, including Alzheimer's disease, and has been providing latest health information through various channels, including the Elderly Health Service website, the Elderly Health Information Hotline, education kit for elderly carers, online videos,

media interviews, the Elderly Health Service Newsletter and health talks to enhance public understanding of the disease and provide family members of dementia patients and carers of the elderly with practical skills and insights in managing diseases. In addition, the HA has been implementing various health promotion activities, including organising educational talks and publishing pamphlets, to raise community awareness towards dementia, including Alzheimer's disease.

The Social Welfare Department (SWD) launched a territory-wide public education campaign Dementia Friendly Community Campaign from September 2018 to March 2023 to enhance public understanding of dementia, including Alzheimer's disease, and to encourage the community to show care and take action to support dementia patients and their carers. The SWD has also allocated additional programme resources to all District Elderly Community Centres and Neighbourhood Elderly Centres in Hong Kong to organise educational activities at district or neighbourhood level to raise public awareness of dementia.

(5) Dementia, including Alzheimer's disease, is a disease caused by a decline in brain function due to neurological changes. At present, there is no cure for dementia. Patients can slow down the degenerative process of the brain and alleviate the symptoms with pharmacological and non-pharmacological support (e.g. reminiscence, multi-sensory and cognitive training, etc).

It was announced in "The Chief Executive's 2023 Policy Address" that the Government would spare no effort bolstering the development of medical innovation, which can bring the benefits of good drugs and research and development (R&D) to patients in Hong Kong. We will encourage innovative R&D of advanced and effective new drugs in Hong Kong, and adopt measures to promote the transformation of innovative technologies into clinical applications to benefit more patients.

The Government will enhance the current evaluation and registration mechanism for drugs, and establish an internationally renowned regulatory authority of drugs and medical devices. Specifically, the Government will leverage medical strengths of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) in a more proactive and efficient manner, and establish the Hong Kong Centre for Medical Products Regulation, to implement the long-term objective of establishing an authority that registers drugs and medical devices under the "primary evaluation" approach, i.e. to directly evaluate drugs and medical devices in Hong Kong based on clinical trial data. This will help accelerate the clinical use of new drugs and medical devices, and drive the development of industries relating to the R&D and clinical testing of medical products.

At the same time, the Government plans to set up the Greater Bay Area International Clinical Trial Institute to provide a one-stop clinical trial support platform for biomedical and research institutions, to co-ordinate clinical trial resources in the public and private healthcare sectors in the HKSAR, and to further enhance the development of clinical trials, which will complement the development of the "primary evaluation" mechanism.

The above measures will help provide better pharmacological support to different groups of patients in Hong Kong, including those suffering from dementia and amongst which, Alzheimer's disease. The Government will continue to closely monitor the latest developments in the diagnosis and treatment of dementia, including Alzheimer's disease, with a view to providing appropriate care to the patients concerned.

Murder and attempted suicide in Kowloon City

Police are investigating a murder and attempted suicide case in Kowloon City today (March 27) in which an 84-year-old man died.

At 4.30am, Police received a report that a woman was found lying unconsciously in a flat on Beacon Hill Road.

Police officers sped to the scene. Sustaining cut wound on neck and hand, the 71-year-old woman was rushed to Caritas Medical Centre in unconscious state and was transferred to Princess Margaret Hospital later.

Officers located the woman's 84-year-old husband in the flat who was in unconscious state. He was certified dead at scene. Initial investigation revealed that the woman was suspected to have covered her husband's nose and mouth with plastic tape and attempted to commit suicide afterwards. No will note was found at scene.

A cutter which was in suspected connection with the case were seized at scene.

Post-mortem examinations will be conducted later to ascertain the cause of death of the deceased.

Active investigation by the District Crime Squad of Kowloon City District is underway. Anyone who witnessed the incident or has any information to offer is urged to contact the investigating officers on 3661 7859.