

Public urged to work together to fight against tuberculosis

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (March 24) urged the public to work together to prevent tuberculosis (TB) infection by maintaining personal and environmental hygiene at all times in support of World TB Day 2024.

The World Health Organization has designated March 24 of each year as World TB Day to raise public awareness and knowledge about TB and encourage global efforts to combat TB together.

According to the CHP's latest statistics, there were 3 260 notifications of TB cases (provisional figure) recorded in Hong Kong in 2023, and with about 170 TB-related deaths (half of them are persons aged 80 or above). Despite a marked and consistent decrease in the notification figures in Hong Kong in the past few decades, TB is still an important infectious disease around the globe. A cautious approach to the prevention work of TB needs to be maintained.

"To enhance public awareness, besides disseminating TB-related information on the Internet and social media platforms, the CHP will also work with the Hong Kong Tuberculosis, Chest and Heart Diseases Association and the Hospital Authority to organise a series of health education talks. By doing this, we can remind the public about the importance of staying vigilant as well as early diagnosis and treatment of TB. Likewise, preventive measures against TB have to be reinforced in order to achieve the goal of eliminating TB," a CHP spokesman said.

Early identification of TB cases and prompt initiation of anti-TB treatment remain the mainstay of TB control. The chest clinics under the CHP provide TB patients with free outpatient consultation and treatment. The spokesman added that the treatment of TB involves a prescription of multiple medications which normally lasts for six months, and TB patients should stringently comply with the treatment regimen to minimise the emergence of drug-resistant TB.

TB is an airborne disease. When a TB patient coughs or sneezes, small droplets containing the tubercle bacilli are generated and spread in the air. If another person breathes in these small airborne droplets, he or she may be infected with the germ. Prolonged exposure, however, is usually the prerequisite for the disease to be effectively transmitted. The spokesman reminded members of the public to maintain continued vigilance against TB and adopt a healthy lifestyle with a balanced diet, avoid smoking and alcohol, and have suitable exercise and adequate rest to minimise the chance of contracting the disease. If symptoms develop, such as persistent cough, blood in sputum, weight loss, fever and night sweating, they should seek prompt medical advice. If diagnosed as having TB disease, the patient should strengthen their respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette, and receive TB

treatment under the doctor's advice.

For more TB-related information, services and figures, the public may also visit the CHP's page designated for World TB Day (www.info.gov.hk/tb_chest/worldtbdays.htm) and the website of the Tuberculosis and Chest Service (www.info.gov.hk/tb_chest), or call the telephone hotline (2572 6024).

Yellow fire danger warning

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations:

Yellow fire danger warning

The fire danger situation today (March 24) is yellow and the risk of fire is high. People are urged to prevent fires breaking out and hikers should also be vigilant.

23rd round of computer ballot registration for submitting applications for Northbound Travel for Hong Kong Vehicles open March 25 to 28

The Transport Department today (March 24) reminded members of the public that the 23rd round of computer ballot registration for submitting applications for Northbound Travel for Hong Kong Vehicles (the scheme) will be open from 10am tomorrow (March 25) to 11.59pm on March 28, and the ballot result will be announced on March 29.

Eligible applicants for the scheme can register for computer balloting through the designated website (www.hzmbqfs.gov.hk). Successful balloting applicants are required to submit applications for the scheme within the designated date and time randomly allocated by the computer system.

[Green tech addresses waste and noise](#)

The Green Tech Fund has to date supported 30 projects that align with the Government's aim of achieving carbon neutrality, awarding around \$130 million in total.

News.gov.hk spoke with representatives of the Environment and Ecology Bureau to understand the fund's research priorities. A technology company supported by the fund and focused on recycling plastics to create noise-absorbing materials also shared the features of the materials.

The story is available at www.news.gov.hk/eng/feature/ today (March 24) in text and video format.

[Ping Wo Fund holds Anti-gambling Get Set Go Carnival \(with photos\)](#)

The following is issued on behalf of the Ping Wo Fund Advisory Committee:

Co-organised by the Home and Youth Affairs Bureau (HYAB) and the Ping Wo Fund, in association with the Hong Kong Police Force, the "Anti-gambling Get Set Go" Carnival was held at the MacPherson Playground in Mong Kok today (March 23), attracting more than 1 000 participants.

The carnival was funded by the Ping Wo Fund. Through booth games, exhibition and stage performances, the carnival aimed to promote the no-gambling message to participants and to further raise public awareness of the harm of gambling addiction.

Speaking at the kick-off ceremony of the carnival, the Secretary for Home and Youth Affairs, Miss Alice Mak, said that, as addiction to gambling could cause harms to individuals and to the society, it has been the Government's established policy not to encourage gambling. To address problems caused by gambling, the Government established the Ping Wo Fund in September 2003 to finance public education and counselling, treatment and other support services for gamblers with a view to preventing and alleviating problems relating to gambling.

Miss Mak said that, the HYAB wished to instill in children and the youth the values of no-gambling and to promote the message of "Healthy Living, No Gambling" in the community. The Bureau also wished to further raise public's awareness of the Gambling Counselling Hotline 183 4633, financed by the Ping Wo Fund and its services through the carnival.

Miss Mak appealed to people who found themselves or their family members or relatives facing gambling-related problems to call the Gambling Counselling Hotline for prompt assistance at the carnival. "The Ping Wo Fund's counsellors will definitely uphold the spirit of serving the community with heart and provide appropriate support to individuals affected by gambling problems, including their family members," she said.

Meanwhile, a new TV Announcement in the Public Interest (API) with the theme of "Stay away from gambling. Don't bet your life on it" was premiered at the carnival. The new API highlights the harm of addiction to gambling, urges members of the public to avoid excessive gambling and encourages gamblers with gambling disorder and those affected by them to call the Gambling Counselling Hotline for assistance. The TV API and the corresponding radio API will be broadcast in late March.

Other officiating guests of the carnival included the Chairperson of the Ping Wo Fund Advisory Committee, Ms Lu Hai; and the Chief Superintendent of Organized Crime and Triad Bureau of the Hong Kong Police Force, Mr Kwan King-pan.

The establishment of the Ping Wo Fund aims to finance public education and other measures to prevent or alleviate problems relating to gambling; provide counselling, treatment and other remedial or support services for gamblers with gambling disorder and those affected by them; and conduct research and studies into problems and issues relating to gambling. The Ping Wo Fund Advisory Committee is a non-statutory body to advise the HYAB on the use and application of the Ping Wo Fund.

