

# Updated blood donation precautionary measures in response to COVID-19

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The Hong Kong Red Cross Blood Transfusion Service (BTS) has established a policy to ensure blood safety. The BTS regularly reviews the blood donation arrangements for prospective donors who return from areas with potential risks of infectious diseases. In response to the latest developments regarding COVID-19, the spokesperson for the BTS today (March 16) announced the following precautionary measures to be implemented with immediate effect.

- Members of the public who have travelled outside Hong Kong to any destination recently should be deferred from blood donations for 28 days from the date of arrival.
- Members of the public who have had close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 should be deferred from blood donations for 28 days.
- Members of the public confirmed as having COVID-19 will be deferred for 180 days following a complete recovery.

The above arrangements have been made after careful assessment and with thorough consideration of the associated risks of blood safety by the Hospital Authority (BTS) Expert Panel on Blood and Blood Products Safety. The Expert Panel will work closely with relevant departments to monitor the latest developments and to review related measures in a timely manner. Meanwhile, all blood donors are reminded that if they develop symptoms of fever, respiratory tract infection or pneumonia after a blood donation, they should seek medical advice and inform the healthcare staff of the BTS as soon as possible during office hours at 2710 1201, 2710 1243 or 2710 1298. Outside office hours please call 2710 1210 or 2710 1234.