



中華人民共和國香港特別行政區政府總部醫務衛生局
Health Bureau, Government Secretariat
The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
The People's Republic of China

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15 July 2022

Hon. LEUNG Man-kwong
Room 809, Legislative Council Complex
1 Legislative Council Road
Central, Hong Kong

Dear Hon. Leung,

Support Services for Children with “Post COVID-19 Condition”

In response to your letter dated 13 June 2022 as referred by the Legislative Council Secretariat regarding support services targeted for children with “post COVID-19 condition”, please see our reply as below:

Since the outbreak of COVID-19, the Government has been paying close attention to patients recovered from COVID-19, and endeavours to provide appropriate and comprehensive support services to help them recover, adapt and resume to normal living as soon as possible while minimising the impact of "post COVID-19 condition" (or "long COVID") on their psycho-social well-being.

The Hospital Authority (HA) has all along been providing necessary support to COVID-19 patients in need of medical services. For children recovered from COVID-19, paediatricians will arrange follow-up consultations and refer them to receive other rehabilitation services according to their clinical needs, such as rehabilitation and psychological support services of different specialties and allied health services. In the fifth wave, around 8,348 admissions and 4,582 attendance at Designated Clinics for patients under 18 years old were recorded.

On the other hand, with the facilitation and support of the Government, the HA launched in April 2020 the “Special Chinese Medicine (CM) Out-patient Programme”. It provides, through the CM Clinics cum Training and Research Centres in 18 districts across the city, a maximum of ten free-of-charge sessions of CM general consultation out-patient rehabilitation services to eligible COVID-19 infected patients, according to actual situation. Participation of this programme is on a voluntary basis and there is no age limit. As at 28 June 2022, over 38,000 recovered patients have joined the programme (5% of whom aged below 18) with over 134,600 consultations conducted. Furthermore, District Health Centres (DHCs) and DHC Expresses in various districts also provide recovered patients of different age, including children and adolescents, with multi-disciplinary advice and support on post-recovery health management, covering a number of areas such as nutrition and CM preventive care, exercise and fitness training, as well as improving sleep, stress and fatigue, etc.

To enhance our understanding of "long COVID" through evidence-based clinical research, the Government has approved funding for seven studies related to "long COVID", covering physical and mental impact on COVID-19 recovered patients, including physical disorders, cardiopulmonary functions and neuropsychiatric sequelae, as well as enhancement of clinical management and rehabilitation programmes to improve the quality of life of COVID-19 recovered patients. For children and adolescents recovered from COVID-19, paediatricians will continue to arrange suitable treatment and necessary follow-up consultations according to their clinical situation. Meanwhile, the University of Hong Kong, the Education University of Hong Kong and the Hong Kong Polytechnic University are collaborating on a research to examine the impact COVID-19 has on the brain development of children and adolescents. The research team will invite COVID-19 recovered patients to join the clinical research on a voluntary basis.

The Health Bureau will continue to duly support research studies relating to "long COVID". At the same time, we will also closely monitor the latest World Health Organisation guidelines and relevant scientific evidence on the treatment of "long COVID". Thank you for your keen interest on public health services.

Yours faithfully,

(Howard CHU)
for Secretary for Health

c.c. Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, GBS, JP