

For Immediate Release

## **HKSH Medical Group (HKSH) pledges its best efforts To support public hospitals in the face of the 5<sup>th</sup> wave of COVID-19**

( March 5, 2022 – Hong Kong ) HKSH Medical Group (HKSH) reiterates its commitment to guarding the medical frontline in Hong Kong in the fight against the pandemic by providing uninterrupted services to patients in need and supporting the Government of HKSAR in combating COVID-19. The Hospital has started to collaborate with the Hospital Authority (HA) to serve non COVID-19 referrals and will continue to discuss with HA possible solutions to alleviate the stressful situations at public hospitals, taking into consideration of its manpower capacity and available facilities at HKSH, and to safeguard the safety of patients, staff and the community as a whole.

Collaboration with HA has already been kick-started with a taskforce led by a Deputy Medical Superintendent of HKSH to directly engage in discussion and coordination of referrals from the public hospitals since late February. In early March, emergency operations for two cancer patients were referred to and successfully completed at HKSH. The Hospital welcomes more referrals from HA, including deliveries, patients with cardio-vascular conditions and cancer patients requiring radiotherapy and other treatments. HKSH will continue to explore ways with HA to enhance efficiency and effectiveness of referrals, including designating a cluster of hospitals to facilitate ongoing referrals and transfers.

Since the outbreak, HKSH has been under immense manpower pressure, especially in the severe situation of the fifth wave of Omicron in which the number of community transmission cases has soared rapidly. More than 20% of its staff members were infected in the community or at home, or were classified as close contacts, hence required to take sick leave and undergo home quarantine. Frontline staffing in the Hospital is now extremely tight.

However, HKSH takes upon itself the aims of saving lives, relieving suffering and protecting patient's interest. In the face of the COVID-19 threats, the Hospital has been adhering to two major goals: 1) to prevent the risk of transmission in the hospital so that the medical care and treatment for non-COVID-19 patients will not be affected; and 2) to continue to provide appropriate treatment to patients who are being treated in the hospital but unfortunately have contracted the disease.

Taking account of the experience during SARS in 2003, HKSH has built two airborne isolation rooms with negative pressure facilities years ago for minimizing infection risk and serving seriously-ill patients. In view of the current pandemic, the Hospital has also designated dedicated wards for inpatients, who were tested COVID-19 positive after admitted to hospital, to isolate and to continue their treatment. Recently, a few inpatients were diagnosed as positive in the routine screening, and the Hospital immediately isolated them and continued to provide necessary treatment for them until discharge.

Meanwhile, HKSH has full responsibility to take care of its non-COVID-19 patients, among them some are in vulnerable conditions including those who are undergoing renal dialysis, chemotherapy and radiotherapy. It is the utmost responsibility of the Hospital to safeguard patients' safety during their stay at the Hospital.

Throughout the pandemic, HKSH has maintained 24-hour outpatient service to treat patients of all kinds, including COVID-19 confirmed cases with mild symptoms. In addition, for those confirmed cases and close contact during home quarantine, HKSH Telemedicine for Family Medicine has been further strengthened with DeliveryMed service to enable timely treatment and assistance. HKSH understands that the provision of COVID-19 test is an important line of defence. Our Molecular Pathology Department continues to offer full range of COVID-19 PCR testing services with quick reporting turnaround to help curb community spread.

While staff members at HKSH are facing the same risks of infection as everyone else in Hong Kong, HKSH has the destined duty to ensure the integral operation of the Hospital is sustainable and safe for guarding the clinical battlefield and serving the patients in need in Hong Kong. At HKSH, we will continue to spare no efforts in collaboration with HA and explore every possible means to help support the public sector in the joint fight against the pandemic.

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### **HKSH Medical Group**

Officially launched in September 2017, HKSH Medical Group promotes public health and advanced medicine through a multi-faceted, coordinated approach in clinical services, medical education, scientific research and public health education. Members of the Group, including Hong Kong Sanatorium & Hospital, HKSH Healthcare, HKSH Eastern Medical Centre and HKSH Cancer Centre, are dedicated to offering top-quality holistic care to patients, upholding the motto "Quality in Service, Excellence in Care".

### **Hong Kong Sanatorium & Hospital**

Hong Kong Sanatorium & Hospital is one of the leading private hospitals in Hong Kong. With the motto "Quality in Service Excellence in Care", the Hospital is committed to serving the public as well as promoting medical education and research.

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