



中華人民共和國香港特別行政區政府總部衛生福利及食物局  
Health, Welfare and Food Bureau  
Government Secretariat, Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region  
The People's Republic of China

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To : All Healthcare Workers

Dear Colleagues,

A year has passed since SARS was finally brought under control in Hong Kong after a hard-fought, 15-week battle against the disease. With your many contributions and strong support, remarkable progress has since been made to improve our healthcare infrastructure and enhance our system capabilities by putting the recommendations of the SARS Expert Committee into practice. I am pleased to inform you that a funding of \$538 million for the construction of a new infectious disease centre at the Princess Margaret Hospital has now been approved.

The new infectious disease centre, when completed in June 2007, will provide additional isolation beds and accommodate a clinical laboratory for the handling, collection and distribution of highly infectious specimens, and an office of the Infection Control Branch of the Centre for Health Protection (CHP).

It was because of the heroic efforts of all healthcare workers that SARS was eventually brought under control. As a token of our recognition and appreciation of your contributions, the new infectious disease centre at the Princess Margaret Hospital will be dedicated to our healthcare colleagues who died in the fight against SARS, and to all healthcare workers who have contributed to the fight against the disease. A plaque will be laid at a prominent place inside the new building to commemorate your fighting spirit.

I would like to take this opportunity to, once again, thank all colleagues of the Hospital Authority, the private sector, and the Department of Health for having worked tirelessly and given your best in fighting the SARS epidemic. You have, through your resilience, selfless service and self-sacrifice, shown everyone the true meaning of professionalism and care. Here, my special thoughts and gratitude go to our colleagues who have given their lives so that others may live.

I am privileged to have been able to work with you in fighting SARS together. I am deeply moved by how everyone – supporting staff, professionals, frontline staff, management – were united in the outbreak control efforts, and tackled SARS with the same spirit of dedication and professionalism.

With your support and dedication, the detection and preventive measures we have put in place have worked. It is perhaps no coincidence that Hong Kong has been free from avian flu this year when our neighbours were adversely affected, and that SARS has not reared its ugly head again. However, we should continue to remain vigilant and not be complacent. There are still many challenges ahead.

Let us pool our collective knowledge and the lessons we have learned from SARS, and move forward together. It is not just for the benefit of Hong Kong, but also the rest of the world – in this age of globalisation and rapidly growing air travel, our health system is an important line of defence against the outbreak of new infectious diseases.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all the best in your future work. Working together, we will make Hong Kong a healthier and safer place.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E.K. Yeoh', written in a cursive style.

(Dr. E.K. Yeoh)  
Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food