

Friday, 2 January 2026

Public hospitals experience smooth operations on second day of public healthcare fees and charges reform

On the second day (January 2) of the implementation of the Hospital Authority public healthcare fees and charges reform (fees and charges reform), public hospitals maintained smooth operation. The HA will continue to deploy additional manpower across various departments at hospitals to assist patients in need.

On the first day (January 1) of the fees and charges reform, 3888 patients attended the Accident and Emergency departments (A&E) of 18 public hospitals, a decrease of about 25% when comparing to New Year's Day last year. From midnight to 2pm today, 2329 patients attended all A&E, approximately 30% fewer than the same time period of January 2 of last year. Among the patients seeking medical consultation, there were 34 critical cases and 82 emergency cases. According to the new fees and charges arrangement, these two categories of patients will have their A&E charges fully exempted. The other cases subject to the new fees and charges arrangement include 986 urgent cases, 1171 semi-urgent cases, and 56 non-urgent cases. The average waiting times for semi-urgent and non-urgent cases was around 55 minutes, which is shorter compared to the average waiting time for the same period last year (approximately 147 minutes) for semi-urgent and non-urgent cases.

Additionally, the HA's 75 Family Medicine Clinics (FMCs) providing family medicine outpatient services also operated smoothly today. As of 2pm today, approximately 10000 patients attended these FMCs, with overall service usage remaining similar to that before the implementation of the measures.

The HA has deployed additional manpower to expedite the processing of patients' medical fee waivers applications. As of 2pm today, public hospitals received approximately 3300 applications in total for the day, with nearly 90% approved, amounting to about 2900 applications. The remaining cases will be processed as soon as possible. Compared to the 14000 individuals who were approved for medical fee waivers in 2023/24, the HA has approved approximately 35000 applications since early November last year, benefiting citizens in need.

Furthermore, patients who had previously scheduled non-urgent radiology services or pathology services will be receiving payment notifications through mail or the HA mobile application HA Go starting from January 1. The HA reminds patients with recent appointments can arrange payment as early as practicable upon receiving the notification. For patients with distant appointment dates, payment can be arranged at their convenience after

receiving the notification. Patients are not required to settle the payment immediately. Patients undergoing non-urgent radiology services must settle the payment at least 14 days before their appointment date, while patients requiring pathology services must settle the payment before testing. If patients have questions regarding payment items, they can inquire with healthcare staff during follow-up appointment, and specialist out-patient clinics will also have Integrated Patient Service Centres to provide detailed explanations about payment arrangements.

The HA reminds patients that the fees and charges reform has been implemented. Patients are advised to familiarise themselves with the new fees and charges arrangements before visiting public hospitals or outpatient clinics. Some medical service procedures have also been modified. Every cluster has set up hotlines (see table below) for patients to inquire about the fees and charges reform arrangements. Patients can also visit the [HA website](#) to learn about the new arrangements.

Hotlines for Public Healthcare Fees and Charges Reform

Clusters	Hotlines
Hong Kong East Cluster	6460 4303
Hong Kong West Cluster	2255 4177
Kowloon Central Cluster	3506 7198
Kowloon East Cluster	5215 7326
Kowloon West Cluster	3467 7575
New Territories East Cluster	6273 3551
New Territories West Cluster	2468 5353

Service hours: 2-11 January 2026, 8am to 8pm

* * * * *