

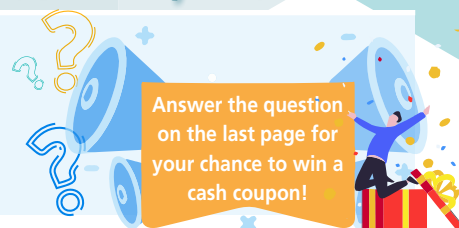
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May 2026

Quality Excellence: Transforming the Acute Chest Pain Patient Journey

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Chest Pain Centre Green Channel is “Go, go, go”

By **Dr T C TSANG**

Department of Accident & Emergency (A&E), Queen Mary Hospital



瑪麗醫院胸痛中心
Chest Pain Centre



Mr. Chan, in his 50's, recalls his terrifying experience of crushing central chest pain one evening. His prehospital electrocardiogram (ECG) was transmitted by ambulance to A&E and recognised as a ST elevation myocardial infarction (STEMI), allowing early notification to the cardiac care unit via an HA Chat group (Figure 1 & 2). The cardiac team was on standby for Mr. Chan's management and he was promptly transferred to the cardiac catheterisation laboratory for primary percutaneous coronary intervention.

“Time is muscle” is a critical cardiology phrase meaning that during a heart attack (specifically acute myocardial infarction and STEMI), every minute delayed in treatment causes more heart muscle to die. Rapid interventions, such as angioplasty, are necessary to restore blood flow, limit irreversible damage and improve survival rates.

In 2023, Queen Mary Hospital (QMH) embarked on the challenge to become Hong Kong's first Chest Pain Centre (CPC) according to national accreditation standards aimed at improving the diagnosis process and treatment outcomes for cardiovascular patients. QMH and mainland experts collaborated, exchanged insights in managing cardiac patients and Hong Kong's first CPC green channel was launched in November 2024. An accreditation ceremony was held during the 2025 HA Convention to mark Hong Kong's first Nationally Accredited CPC, promoting the national CPC certification as an international standard. These standards encompass enhanced technology, improved treatment efficiency, standardised indicators and interdepartmental collaboration (Figure 3).

Since introducing the CPC green channel, the average door-to-wire time has been dramatically reduced to less than 60 mins (target < 90 mins), allowing more favourable patient outcomes.

Mr. Chan has since recovered with full cardiac function and quality of life, demonstrating the effectiveness of such measures.

Other critical steps of green channel management include performing paperless ECG once the patient arrives at the A&E department, early senior screening of ECGs, point-of-care high-sensitivity troponin testing, enhanced digital communication and teamwork. The quality outcomes are monitored closely to continually improve the CPC service and save lives. Looking forward, the team looks to integrate AI technology and refine pathways for other critical emergencies including aortic dissection and pulmonary embolism, to improve outcomes in these life-threatening conditions that present with acute chest pain.



Figure 1: Chest Pain Centre – A&E entrance



Figure 2: Early notification to the cardiac care unit



Figure 3: Hong Kong's first Chest Pain Centre in QMH

Editorial Comments

Queen Mary Hospital's accreditation as Hong Kong's first Chest Pain Centre reflects the Hospital Authority's unwavering commitment to delivering world-class, evidence-based emergency cardiac services. Through prehospital ECG transmission, point-of-care diagnostics, and interdepartmental collaboration, the green channel reduces door-to-wire time and improves patient outcomes — pioneering the groundwork for developing a robust chest pain treatment infrastructure and network in Hong Kong.

Prof. William CHUI, Chief Pharmacist, HAHO

IT Support to Chest Pain Centre

By **Mr Benny KU**

Information Technology and Health Informatics Division, Hospital Authority Head Office

The Policy Address 2022 advocated the establishment of a Cardiovascular Disease Centre to provide integrated services for patients requiring multidisciplinary professional support. With this direction, Queen Mary Hospital (QMH) was selected as the pilot site to set up “Green Channel” for chest pain patients, paving the way toward national accreditation as a Chest Pain Centre (CPC).

Management of acute chest pain patient is time-critical, involving multi-specialties and every minute counts for patient survival. CMS Smart IT tools must be therefore integrated to support the entire journey from admission all the way to the provision of multidisciplinary care. The integrated workflow is designed to facilitate communication, streamline care processes and enhance efficiency.

- **Expressed Registration** through Smart ID Card reader minimises registration time and enables instant use of CMS for patient caring.
- **Paperless Electrocardiogram (ECG)** module enables instant ECG upload to CMS. An activation button triggers chest pain team communication through HA Chat.
- **Clinical Team Activation (CTA)** enables sharing the ECG of patient through HA Chat to chest pain team members, ensuring the right information reaches the right person immediately. Instant access to ECG, communication and patient arrangement can be achieved through HA Chat.

The IT support for chest pain service has been piloted in QMH in September 2024, further rollout to other hospitals (PWH, NDH, AHNH, PMH, CMC, YCH & NLTH)* providing acute chest pain services. A total of 1224 chest pain activations were recorded since rollout.

* Prince of Wales Hospital, North District Hospital, Alice Ho Miu Ling Nethersole Hospital, Princess Margaret Hospital, Caritas Medical Centre, Yan Chai Hospital and North Lantau Hospital

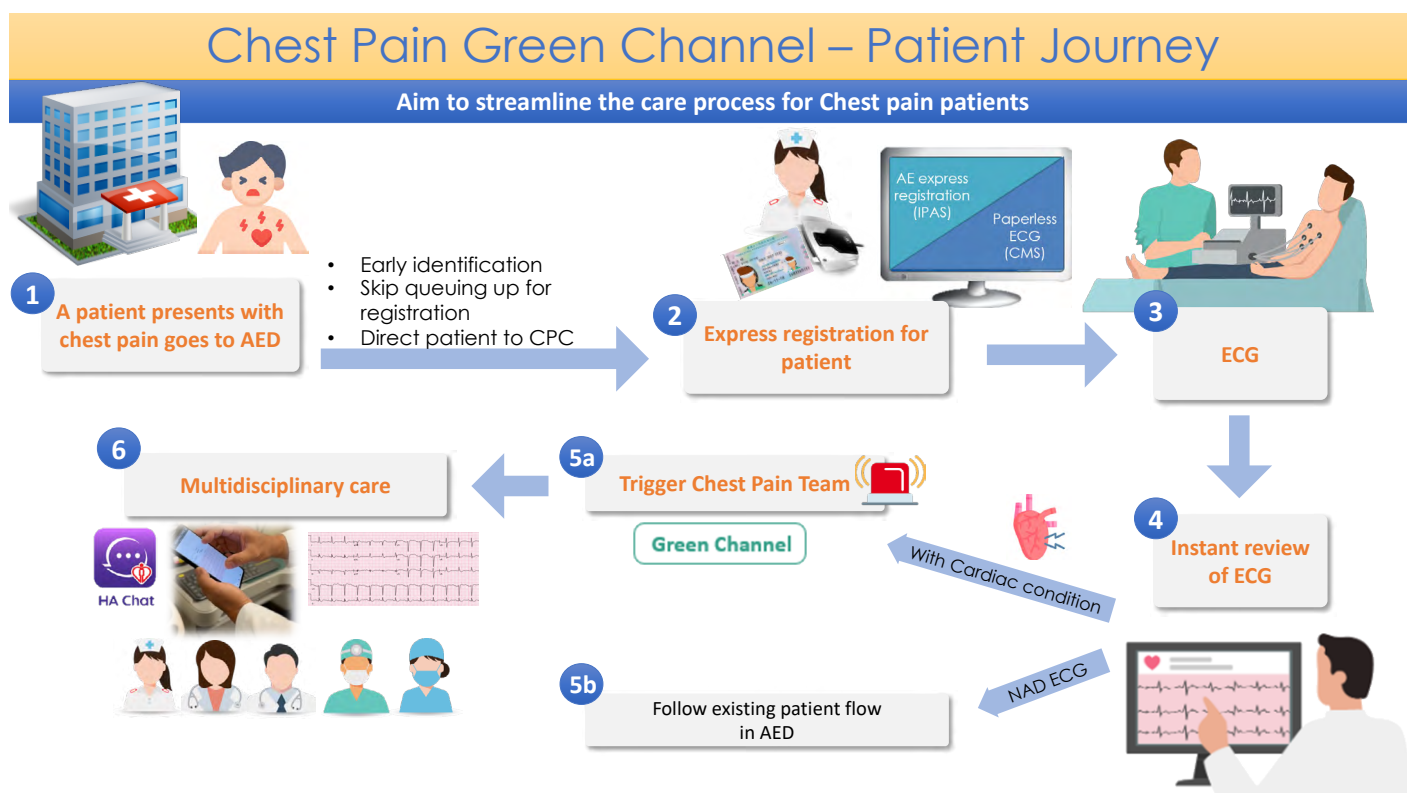


Figure 1: Patient journey of the chest pain green channel

Editorial Comments

The “Green Channel” of the Chest Pain Centre represents a significant step toward coordinated, patient-centred cardiovascular care. Building on the strengths of integrated Smart IT workflows, QMH’s pilot demonstrates how time-critical chest pain management can be achieved through faster registration, instant ECG sharing, and rapid clinical team activation. This service model will be rolled out to other hospitals across Hong Kong to further strengthening the chest pain services.

Dr H M HUI, Deputy Service Director (Quality & Safety), HKEC 2

More than Statistics: The Implication of Establishing 1st Chest Pain Centre in Hong Kong

By **Mr Chris Tat Chung LAM**

Division of Cardiology, Department of Medicine, Queen Mary Hospital

In view of the increasing incidence and mortality rates of cardiovascular diseases in China, a nationwide network of Chest Pain Centres (CPCs) was established since 2013 according to standardised criteria for assessment and accreditation. It yields significant results in improving chest pain treatment processes and enhancing service efficiency, in particular the reduction in Door-to-wire time for patients receiving Primary Percutaneous Coronary Intervention. In 2023, Hong Kong also followed the mainland's lead in establishing the CPC in Queen Mary Hospital (QMH) and was successfully accredited in 2025, signifies a new milestone for optimising patient journey suffering from cardiovascular diseases.

The successful implementation of CPC in Hong Kong depends not only on clinical protocols, but also on "Change" culture. The core mechanism was a cultural shift from fragmented, department-by-department responses to a shared, system-wide commitment to rapid assessment and timely treatment. With the shared goals, standard processes could be implemented consistently, delays were reduced and resulted in a shorter door-to-wire time for ST-segment elevation myocardial infarction (STEMI) patients. In QMH, changes included but not limited to:

- i) Call list for doctors was adjusted to provide 100% cardiologists or trainee to provide onsite support
- ii) Restructure the Cath Lab training for Coronary Care Unit nurses to provide onsite support since May 2023
- iii) 24/7 onsite service by Radiographer since September 2024
- iv) Use of smart initiatives, e.g. Express registration, paperless electrocardiogram and HA Chat for timely information exchange
- v) Hospital wide trainings, community health talks and promotions were organised to raise awareness for hospital staff and general public, etc

Successful implementation does not stop at training; it also requires ongoing monitoring, audit, and feedback. Regular audit meetings between A&E and cardiac teams allow us to continually improve while striving for excellence. As performance data becomes part of learning, culture shift becomes sustainable.

In conclusion, the successful establishment of 1st CPC in QMH illustrates that change culture is the foundation that enables operational excellence. We wish our successful experience can also serve as an important reference for global high-quality CPC development in the future.



Group photo of Cardiac Team sharing joy in the 15th China Chest Pain Centre Congress (CCPCC)

Editorial Comments

The first accredited Chest Pain Centre in Queen Mary Hospital signifies a new milestone in cardiovascular emergency care. It demonstrates meaningful cultural shift, multidisciplinary collaboration and shared commitment to high-quality patient-centred care. This successful experience serves as an important reference for developing similar services across other clusters.

Dr Victor IP, Service Director (Quality & Safety), KEC **3**

National Chest Pain Centre Accreditation

By **Dr Chris TSANG**
Integrated Clinical Services Department, Hospital Authority Head Office

Commitment to Advancing Chest Pain Management

The Hospital Authority (HA) is committed to enhancing the quality of care for patients with cardiovascular diseases. The establishment of Chest Pain Centres (CPCs), aligned with national accreditation standards, was highlighted as a key initiative in the Chief Executive’s 2023 and 2024 Policy Address. Queen Mary Hospital (QMH) has established the **Hong Kong’s first CPC since November 2024** and received national accreditation in May 2025. Building on this success, the second CPC in Prince of Wales Hospital (PWH) has commenced operations since February 2026, with national accreditation anticipated to be obtained by the end of 2026.



Figure 1: Mainland CPC Experts Visit to PWH on 2 April 2026

Achieving New Heights in Patient Care

The national accreditation standards, formulated by leading cardiology experts from the Chinese Cardiovascular Association (CCA), emphasise on improving diagnosis and treatment outcomes for acute chest pain patients through standardised workflows, multidisciplinary collaboration, and evidence-based protocols. Accreditation is granted according to a **comprehensive evaluation across five key areas**: hospital’s infrastructure and personnel qualifications, assessment and treatment of acute chest pain patients, integration of pre-hospital emergency system with in-hospital Green Channels, staff training and public education, and continuous performance improvement of CPC.

The 15th China Chest Pain Centers Congress (CCPCC)

This milestone event, jointly organised by the HA, the National Clinical Research Center for Interventional Medicine, the Guangdong Chest Pain Centers Association, and the CCA, **was being held in Hong Kong for the first time on 3 and 4 April 2026**, with a concurrent venue in Shenzhen. The pioneering **“dual-city interaction” format** capitalised on Hong Kong’s strategic position as an international hub to foster academic innovation, integrate clinical practices, and elevate national chest pain management standards to international prominence. Key highlights, including the issuance of **“Construction and Accreditation Standards for CPCs (International Version)”**, cutting-edge advancements in AI-assisted clinical decision-making and precise Percutaneous Coronary Intervention (PCI) strategies, and full-chain coverage from community prevention to advanced care via the dual-city platform.



Figure 2: Opening Ceremony of the 15th China Chest Pain Centers Congress on 3 April 2026

Driving Excellence in Patient Care

The HA remains steadfast in its commitment to delivering high-quality care for the community. The establishment of CPCs envisioned as a pivotal step to address Hong Kong’s evolving healthcare needs.

Editorial Comments

The establishment of HA Chest Pain Centres marks a major advance in cardiovascular care, aligning Hong Kong with national standards and fostering cross-border collaboration. Our patients with acute chest pain will benefit through faster, more standardised care, reduced delays, and improved outcomes within the Chest Pain Centres.

Mr Andy KWOK, Senior Manager (Quality & Safety), TMH



Trivia



Please scan the QR code to answer the question of the Trivia. If you answer the following question correctly by 20 June 2026, we will put your name into a lucky draw. Then we will present a gift coupon to each of the 3 winners that we draw.

What do the national accreditation standards for Chest Pain Centres emphasise?

- A. The development of new cardiovascular medications
- B. Improving patient outcomes through standardised workflows, multidisciplinary collaboration, and evidence-based protocols
- C. Increasing the cardiology workforce in public hospitals
- D. Expanding hospital infrastructure for cardiovascular care

Here is the answer of Issue 58 :

Question: Which of the following about CIHA is/are correct? Answer: D

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Comments are welcome

We value your feedback. Please scan the QR code to share your thoughts with us.

