Press Release

The Medical Council of Hong Kong ("the Medical Council") has noted recent media enquiries regarding the decision of the Chairperson of the Inquiry Panel to adjourn a disciplinary inquiry case involving the late young girl, CHAU Tin-yu ("the Case"). To address public concerns, the Medical Council hereby provides a general overview of the procedures governing disciplinary inquiries.

The Case was originally scheduled in early 2026 to be heard in October 2026. However, the Secretariat subsequently learned that the Coroner's Court has decided to hold a death inquest into the passing of the patient. After fully considering and balancing all relevant factors, including the integrity of evidence and procedural justice, the Chairperson of the Inquiry Panel decided to adjourn the disciplinary inquiry. The detailed grounds for the Chairperson's decision to adjourn are as follows:

- **Overlap of Clinical Events and Evidence:** The death inquest and the disciplinary inquiry concerning the Case arise from the same clinical event. Death inquest aims to inquire into the cause of and the circumstances connected with a patient's death, which inevitably involves the clinical management of the patient by the doctor concerned. Likewise, the disciplinary charges in the Case are related to the clinical management of the patient by the doctor concerned. The matters to be considered at the death inquest are therefore highly likely to be directly relevant to or overlap with those to be considered by the Inquiry Panel. The evidence revealed during the course of the death inquest will also substantially overlap with the evidence involved in the disciplinary inquiry of the Case.
- **Broad Statutory Powers of Investigation of the Coroner's Court:** The scope of the disciplinary inquiry by the Inquiry Panel of the Medical Council is strictly confined to specific professional misconduct charges against the doctor concerned. On the other hand, the death inquest will inquire into the cause and circumstances surrounding the patient's passing, which is broader in scope. The adjournment of the disciplinary inquiry until the conclusion of the death inquest allows the Inquiry Panel to make reference to the broader factual findings and determinations to be revealed by the death inquest, thereby enhancing the fairness and comprehensiveness of the disciplinary inquiry.

- **Upholding Justice and Procedural Efficiency:** It must also be taken into account that both the death inquest and the disciplinary inquiry arise from the same clinical event and that the death inquest may reveal further evidence and factual information relevant to the Case. In these circumstances, proceeding with the disciplinary inquiry before the conclusion of the death inquest may lead to a determination by the Inquiry Panel without the benefit of all relevant evidence and facts. This may also give rise to an undesirable situation where the Inquiry Panel and the Coroner's Court reach different factual findings regarding the same incident. Adjourning the disciplinary inquiry would help avoid unnecessary disputes and procedural delays that may otherwise arise if significant new evidence emerges during the death inquest.

It has been suggested that the Inquiry Panel could proceed with the disciplinary inquiry as scheduled, and adjourn the proceedings and reserve final determination after all witnesses have completed their testimony, pending conclusion of the death inquest. However, this arrangement would still require awaiting the conclusion of the case by the Coroner's Court. It would not expedite the disciplinary inquiry process and could also cause unfairness to the parties involved.

The Secretariat of the Medical Council will continue to closely monitor the progress and findings of the death inquest. Upon the conclusion of the death inquest, the Secretariat will reschedule the inquiry date as soon as practicable in accordance with the law and established procedures. The Secretariat has formally notified the complainant of this decision and provided a detailed explanation of the reasons for the adjournment, and will continue to maintain communication with the complainant.

The Medical Council of Hong Kong

28 October 2026