



PRINCE OF WALES HOSPITAL
威爾斯親王醫院

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Attention News Editors:

The spokesperson for Prince of Wales Hospital (PWH) today (11 April) announced the following incident of identification and collection of bodies of deceased patients:

It is suspected that due to staff negligence, the mortuary of PWH has wrongly released the body of an 88-year-old deceased patient to another family of a 77-year-old deceased patient on 29 March 2007. The incident was discovered when the family members concerned collected the body today (11 April).

The hospital management immediately investigated into the incident upon notification. Preliminary investigation revealed that a mortuary attendant on duty had wrongly released the body of an 88-year-old man on 29 March 2007 with the confirmation of the family member. The wrongly released body was subsequently sent to cremation. When the concerned family came to collect the body today (11 April), the mortuary attendant discovered that the body had already been wrongly released.

PWH has contacted both concerned families to inform and explain on the incident. The hospital has expressed deepest apology respectively to both the families.

According to the preliminary findings, PWH believed that the incident was due to the failure of the mortuary attendant on duty to fully comply with the stipulated procedures in verifying the information on the identification tag of the body before releasing it on 29 March. The hospital has temporarily suspended the duty of the concerned staff and would follow up in accordance with human resources policy.

PWH has comprehensively reviewed the concerned procedures for identification and collection of bodies last year according to the Hospital Authority guidelines. Mortuary staff have to correctly record and double verify the personal information on the bracelet and the identification tag of the body as well as the body claiming form before releasing to the family of the deceased. Furthermore, the Hospital Authority has conducted an internal audit last year on the procedures of identification and collection of bodies in public hospitals. The findings revealed that all public hospitals, including PWH, have stipulated effective procedural guidelines.

PWH will conduct a thorough investigation into the incident and also review the procedures to prevent recurrence of similar incident.

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