

# CHINA

## Underage pregnancies to be reported

Some hospitals take action on opinion paper's call for compulsory alarm system

By CANG WEI in Nanjing  
cangwei@chinadaily.com.cn

Hospitals in some Chinese cities are being required to report pregnancies involving girls under the age of 14 to law enforcement.

The People's Procuratorate of Huai'an, East China's Jiangsu province, launched the reporting system recently together with the local health commission.

When a girl under the age of 14 is found to be pregnant, a red alert will automatically remind the attending doctor to report it to local police or prosecutors in the city.

The compulsory reporting system can help avoid problems such as doctors not knowing how to report, or feeling afraid to report, according to the procuratorate in Huai'an.

Han Xuejiao, deputy director of the seventh procuratorial department of Huai'an People's Procuratorate, said that the reporting system contains two separate subsystems, with one urging doctors to report and the other allowing every resident to report such cases.

The first subsystem has a three-color alarm system. When teenagers from 16 to 18 years old are found to be pregnant when receiving treatment, the system will give an alarm in yellow on the attending doctors' screens.

An orange alarm will be given when the girls are between 14 to 16 and a red alarm will be given when girls under 14 are diagnosed to be pregnant.

"It is against the law to have sex with a girl under the age of 14 and those violating the law will be convicted of rape," said Han.

"For girls from 14 to 16 years old who are pregnant, we must make sure that the sex happened after they reached 14 years old. And for girls aged 16 to 18, we must con-

firm that they were not forced when they had sex."

Some people, especially legal professionals, expressed concerns that the reporting system might violate the privacy protection of children. Some also argue that some parents, though not many, might be unwilling to report the abuse to avoid possible discrimination against their children who may have already suffered.

"We have considered the privacy protection of children and their parents' concerns," Han said.

"The reporting system is operated by the hospitals, the police and the procuratorate, which all have obligations to protect the privacy of the victims. Hospital workers who have access to the reporting system will sign a confidentiality agreement to make sure that they will not violate the victims' privacy."

The other reporting subsystem, installed on the city's frequently used government mobile app, allows anyone who registers to report information about abuse against teenagers. Those who often have close contact with children during work are especially encouraged to report any abuse they have noticed.

In May 2020, the Supreme People's Procuratorate and nine other departments jointly issued an opinion in favor of establishing mandatory reporting of such abuse.

"The reporting system echoes with the opinion and enables the doctors to have proper channels to fulfill their reporting obligations," said Han.

The cities of Yixing and Lianyungang in Jiangsu have also installed the reporting system in their hospital medical records systems.

*Guo Jun in Nanjing contributed to this story.*

## Student corrects error in Nobel Prize report

By ZHANG ZHIHAO  
zhangzhihao@chinadaily.com.cn

What's your proudest moment in college? Scoring straight As on a report card? Landing that coveted internship at your dream company? For a sophomore electronics major at Tsinghua University, it was correcting a mistake by the Nobel Prize committee and later receiving a thank you note.

In December, a student going by the alias Mu Qing was doing physics homework when he discovered an error in the last equation on page 11 of the scientific background report on the 2022 Nobel Prize in Physics, according to Tsinghua University, who shared the story on Friday.

The story recently went viral on Chinese social media, attracting over 11 million views on the micro-blogging platform Sina Weibo in two days.

The equation was about quantum entanglement, a strange phenomenon in which two photons or other quantum entities behave as one unit even if spatially separated. Quantum entanglement is at the heart of many quantum technologies, including quantum computing, encryption and communication.

The correct equation should have positive signs for all four factors on the right side of the equation instead of two positives and two negatives as was shown in the report.

Mu was perplexed at first. After all, he thought he was just a brash

newcomer to physics who had the gall to question the highest authority in the field. Moreover, the erroneous labeling was inconsequential since it didn't affect the conclusion of the calculation.

But the error kept gnawing at his mind, so Mu asked his professor Wang Xiangbin for help. Instead of being dismissive of the inquiry, Wang patiently tackled the problem with Mu late into the night. After several rounds of calculations, they confirmed that the Nobel committee had made a mistake.

Wang later presented the correction to the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences. Sara Gustavsson, communications officer at the academy, recently replied to Wang, thanking him and Mu for notifying the academy about the error.

After the story went viral, Mu asked reporters to keep him anonymous because he hadn't created any notable scientific breakthroughs. "When I get to make something really impressive, then please publish my real name," he said.

Wang said the quality he treasures the most from his students is the spirit of inquisitiveness. "Even if it was just a clerical error, it should be promptly corrected," he said.

Through this event, Wang said his students should learn that in science, everyone is equal, and there is no absolute authority. "Everybody can pose a legitimate question. Such is the beauty of physics and academia," he said.

## Taking off to new heights



An employee of Hong Kong Express touches the company's new A321neo aircraft during its debut ceremony at Hong Kong International Airport on Wednesday. The plane will depart for Bangkok, Thailand, on its maiden flight on Sunday. The company said its expanded fleet will meet the fast-growing demand for travel in Asia. ANDY CHONG / CHINA DAILY

## Hong Kong education leaders open to ChatGPT's application in universities

By XI TIANQI in Hong Kong  
lindaxi@chinadailyhk.com

Some leading representatives of Hong Kong's higher education sector said they have adopted an open attitude toward the application of artificial intelligence tools like ChatGPT in universities, and encourage front-line educators to actively embrace the change and facilitate students in keeping abreast of major technological advances.

They shared their views in a seminar at the city's Legislative Council on Wednesday, during which lawmakers and experts gathered to discuss how to embrace the opportunities and deal with the challenges brought about by AI.

Lawmaker Wong Kam-fai, an associate dean of the Faculty of Engineering of the Chinese University of Hong Kong, said local universities need to actively think about how to use ChatGPT to help with educational tasks. Developed by OpenAI and launched in November 2022, the powerful chatbot came under the global spotlight this year, with detailed and articulate answers across many domains of knowledge.

Recognizing the chatbot's great potential for helping students with their assignments, he believes the tool also has a good role to play in teaching. Teachers can use it to design questions and evaluate how well their students respond. This can also help students better understand how the AI works, especially in the process of generating content.

Wong also noted that the content generated by ChatGPT is not satisfactory when the topics are related to specific cultures, highlighting the need for developing generative AI that can better understand Chinese culture.

Lau Chi-pang, an associate vice-president of Lingnan University, encourages schools to use AI as a tool for learning and research, thereby increasing the efficiency and output of their research. Lau added that making good use of AI technology in academia will greatly improve the city's overall level of research.

Lawmaker Chow Man-kong, who is also director of STEAM Education and Research Centre of Lingnan University, suggested that the educational community should learn and teach the use of such AI tools as soon as possible, as doing so could

establish a new teaching model for the future.

But he also highlighted the risks of improper usage of the tools, such as for acts of plagiarism or other academic misconduct. He noted that as the information absorbed by AI is from miscellaneous sources, this will affect the accuracy of the output. To effectively use these tools, he said, students must be taught to identify and cross-check the authenticity of the information.

Ray Cheung Chak-chung, chairman of Hong Kong STEM Education Alliance, said he understands that different universities hold different views about the use of ChatGPT, but he hopes they will be able to leverage the latest technologies to promote scientific research and promote Hong Kong's creative science education.

Replying to a lawmaker's ques-

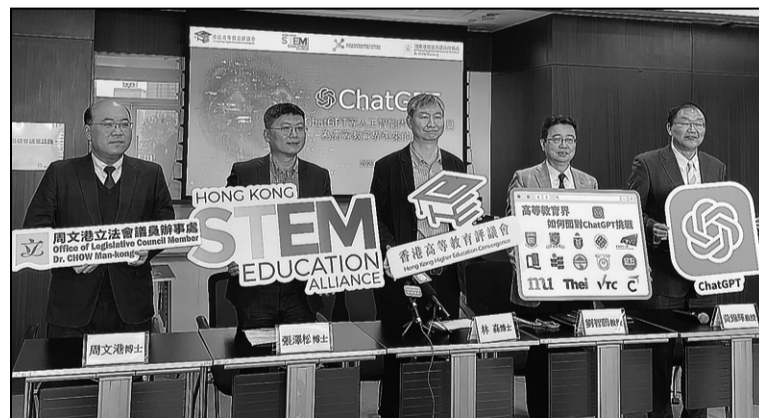
tion about ChatGPT's application in Hong Kong's academic sector, Secretary for Education Christine Choi Yuk-lin told a Legislative Council meeting on Wednesday that many Hong Kong universities have provided specific guidelines to their academic staff and students on their requirements and stance on AI's use by students of taught programs for assignments or course assessments.

Some guidelines state that students may use generative AI if certain conditions are met — such as the explicit highlighting of quotes — or subject to the approval of the teaching staff based on pedagogical needs. Some universities have temporarily banned the use of generative AI for assignments or assessments unless written permission is obtained, pending the development of more comprehensive guidelines.

Universities will monitor non-compliant use of the technology through various means, such as by adopting more advanced plagiarism detection software or by adding an integrity declaration clause.

Choi stressed that all non-compliance cases will be followed up in accordance with the disciplinary mechanisms for safeguarding academic integrity.

Some universities will also consider adjusting their assessment methods and content to enhance the elements of critical thinking and active learning to ensure that the assessment results truly reflect students' learning outcomes and the originality of their work, Choi added.



Hong Kong's lawmakers and education experts attend a seminar on Wednesday to discuss the opportunities and challenges presented by artificial intelligence. XI TIANQI / CHINA DAILY

## SAR home prices post four-month high

By OSWALD CHAN in Hong Kong  
oswald@chinadailyhk.com

Hong Kong's residential-property market has posted gains for two consecutive months, pushing prices to a four-month high.

The price index of private domestic units tracked by the Rating and Valuation Department stood at 345.9 in February, showing a month-on-month increase of 2.2 percent — higher than January's 1.1-percent gain. February's figure represented a yearly decline of 9.8 percent.

Compared with the index's historic high of 398.1 recorded in September 2021, the cumulative decline in property prices had narrowed to 13.1 percent.

S&P Global Ratings sees home prices in the special administrative region reviving slowly this year with the city having lifted all its COVID-19 restrictions and the full resumption of normal travel with the mainland, but an increase in transactions may be more gradual.

"We expect Hong Kong's residential property prices to rebound by 5 percent to 8 percent in 2023, following a 16-percent correction in 2022," said S&P Global Ratings credit analyst Edward Chan.

"Backed by solid pent-up demand, the primary residential-property transaction volume is likely to rise to between 15,000 and 17,000 units this year — from 10,315 units in 2022," he said.

Chan said if homebuyers' demand is weaker than expected due to deteriorating affordability caused by rising interest rates, developers may cut prices further to boost sales.

Global real-estate advisory firm Jones Lang LaSalle expects sentiment in the residential-property market to recover with the resumption of normal travel with the mainland, but an increase in transactions may be more gradual.

Norry Lee, senior director of projects strategy and consultancy at JLL in Hong Kong, said, however, she expects the positive market sentiment arising from the widening of

the value band, enabling first-time homebuyers to pay lower rates in the ad valorem stamp duty, to be short-lived.

JLL data show that 3,051 residential transactions were recorded in January — 18.7 percent lower than the previous year's monthly average of 3,755 transactions. Purchasing activities by nonlocal buyers were also tepid. Only 34 transactions involving buyers' stamp duty were recorded in January, compared to a monthly average of 53 in 2022.

"The rising home prices since the beginning of this year may not last. Once the pent-up demand is digested, turnover is likely to decline again. We expect buyers to remain lukewarm and adopt a wait-and-see attitude until there is a visible pick-up in the local economy. Investors will continue to be sidelined until punitive stamp duties are removed," said Nelson Wong, executive director of Research at JLL in Hong Kong.

According to JLL data, the SAR's median income growth last year was significantly less than the rise in mortgage interest liability. The

estimated monthly interest payment for a HK\$5-million (\$637,000) mortgage loan surged by about HK\$5,500 last year, while the median monthly household income increased by merely HK\$800.

Colliers Hong Kong expects mass residential-property prices to grow by more than 8 percent this year, compared with 2022.

Kathy Lee, head of research at Colliers Hong Kong, warned that the external economic environment would drag down home prices. "Continued geopolitical tensions affecting the mainland's export trade and, subsequently, Hong Kong's import-and-export market performance, along with weakened investor confidence in financial markets due to the US bank crisis, will potentially slow down Hong Kong's economic recovery," she said.

"We are also cautious about the outcome of this year's land sales. If more tenders fail or transactions are made at lower-than-expected bidding prices, property prices will continue to face downward pressure," Lee added.