

9th December 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Hong Kong College of Cardiology
Statement on Coronary Drug-Eluting Stents for PCI

The Hong Kong College of Cardiology (HKCC) is providing the following information in relation to recent communications and the US Food and Drug administration (FDA) on-line information released on 7 Dec 2006 concerning the safety of coronary drug-eluting stents (DES).

DES are extensively used for the treatment of blockage of heart arteries (known as coronary arteries) in percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI, also known as angioplasty). The surface of these stents is coated with drugs that can prevent re-narrowing of the treated arteries which occurs frequently after conventional PCI with ordinary stents. In Hong Kong, we estimate that over 5,000 cases of PCI are performed each year, of which about 70% of stents used are drug-coated.

HKCC has been monitoring the use of DES since its introduction in HK in 2002. Preliminary communications presented in the American College of Cardiology Meeting (March 2006, Atlanta), World Congress of Cardiology (Barcelona, September 2006) and Transcatheter Cardiovascular Therapeutics (Washington DC, Oct 06) provided mixed views on whether there were any increase in events including heart attacks and deaths after DES implantation in the long term. One of the presumed causes is the clogging of stents with blood clot late after PCI (known as late stent thrombosis). Available information suggested that this event is rare and there is no overall increase in deaths or heart attacks after DES use in the long term compare with ordinary stents.

HKCC has summarized the following information for the public:

1. DES has been shown to be more effective than ordinary stents in reducing vessel re-narrowing after PTCA and its consequences including the need for repeat operation.
2. Stent thrombosis is a rare event and may present with heart attack, chest pain or death. This risk is present in both DES and ordinary stents. Clinical

trial data suggested the average risk for late stent thrombosis in DES is around 0.2% per year. There is no overall increase in deaths or heart attacks following DES implantation.

3. There is as yet insufficient data with head-to-head comparison between different stents on the potential development of late stent blockage.
4. In patients indicated for PTCA with suitable clinical and vessel characteristics, DES remain effective and safe, with benefits exceeding potential risks.
5. Compliance to the use of anti-clotting agents (aspirin and clopidogrel) and long term cardiovascular risk prevention remain crucial for the patients' heart health.

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About The Hong Kong College of Cardiology (www.hkcchk.com)

The Hong Kong College of Cardiology (HKCC) is a charitable organisation founded in 1992. It aims at upkeeping the highest standard of cardiovascular practice and working towards the improvement of heart health amongst people of Hong Kong. There are now more than 160 fully accredited fellows.

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