

# CHP investigates hand, foot and mouth disease outbreak at primary school in Eastern District

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (December 18) investigating an outbreak of hand, foot and mouth disease (HFMD) in a primary school in Eastern District, and again urged the public, schools and institutions to maintain strict hand, personal and environmental hygiene.

The outbreak affected 13 boys and seven girls, aged 6 to 7, who have developed oral ulcers, rash and vesicles over hands or feet and fever since December 3. All of them sought medical attention but none required hospitalisation. All patients are in a stable condition.

The stool specimen of an affected student tested positive for enterovirus (EV) (non EV71) upon laboratory testing.

Officers of the CHP have conducted a site visit to the school and advised the management on necessary infection control and preventive measures. The school has been put under medical surveillance. Investigations are ongoing.

"HFMD is common in children while adult cases may also appear. It is usually caused by enteroviruses (EVs) such as Coxsackie virus and EV71. It is clinically characterised by maculopapular rashes or vesicular lesions occurring on the palms, soles and other parts of the body such as the buttocks and thighs. Vesicular lesions and ulcers may also be found in the oral cavity. Sometimes patients present mainly with painful ulcers at the back of the mouth, namely herpangina, without rash on the hands or feet," a spokesman for the CHP said.

"HFMD occurs throughout the year. While the disease activity is usually higher from May to July, a smaller peak may also occur from October to December. As young children are more susceptible, parents should stay alert to their health. Institutional outbreaks may occur where HFMD can easily spread among young children with close contact," the spokesman added.

To prevent HFMD, members of the public, and especially the management of institutions, should take heed of the following preventive measures:

- Maintain good air circulation;
- Wash hands before meals and after going to the toilet or handling diapers or other stool-soiled materials;
- Keep hands clean and wash hands properly, especially when they are dirtied by respiratory secretions, such as after sneezing;
- Cover the nose and mouth while sneezing or coughing and dispose of nasal

- and oral discharges properly;
- Regularly clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces such as furniture, toys and commonly shared items with 1:99 diluted household bleach (mixing one part of bleach containing 5.25 per cent sodium hypochlorite with 99 parts of water), leave for 15 to 30 minutes, and then rinse with water and keep dry. For metallic surfaces, disinfect with 70 per cent alcohol;
  - Use absorbent disposable towels to wipe away obvious contaminants such as respiratory secretions, vomitus or excreta, and then disinfect the surface and neighbouring areas with 1:49 diluted household bleach (mixing one part of bleach containing 5.25 per cent sodium hypochlorite with 49 parts of water), leave for 15 to 30 minutes and then rinse with water and keep dry. For metallic surfaces, disinfect with 70 per cent alcohol;
  - Children who are ill should be kept out of school until their fever and rash have subsided and all the vesicles have dried and crusted;
  - Avoid going to overcrowded places; and
  - Parents should maintain close communication with schools to let them know the latest situation of the sick children.

The public may visit the CHP's page on [HFMD and EV71 infection](#) and [Public Health Advice for Play Facilities](#) for more information.

## [Suspected MERS case reported](#)

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (December 18) reported a suspected case of Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS), and again urged the public to pay special attention to safety during travel, taking due consideration of the health risks in the places they visit. The case is detailed below:

Sex	Female
Age	60
Affected area involved	Qatar
High-risk exposure	Nil
Hospital	Queen Mary Hospital
Condition	Stable
MERS-Coronavirus preliminary test result	Negative

"Travellers to the Middle East should avoid going to farms, barns or markets with camels; avoid contact with sick persons and animals, especially camels, birds or poultry; and avoid unnecessary visits to healthcare facilities. We strongly advise travel agents organising tours to the Middle East to abstain from arranging camel rides and activities involving direct contact with camels, which are known risk factors for acquiring MERS Coronavirus (MERS-CoV)," a spokesman for the CHP said.

Locally, the CHP's surveillance with public and private hospitals, with practising doctors and at boundary control points is firmly in place. Inbound travellers and members of the public who recently visited the Middle East and developed fever or lower respiratory symptoms within 14 days will be classified as suspected MERS cases. They will be taken to public hospitals for isolation and management until their specimens test negative for MERS-CoV.

Travellers to affected areas should maintain vigilance, adopt appropriate health precautions and take heed of personal, food and environmental hygiene. The public may visit the MERS pages of the [CHP](#) and its [Travel Health Service](#), MERS statistics in [affected areas](#), the CHP's [Facebook Page](#) and [YouTube Channel](#), and the World Health Organization's [latest news](#) for more information and health advice. Tour leaders and tour guides operating overseas tours are advised to refer to the CHP's [health advice on MERS](#).

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## [S for IT visits Tuen Mun District](#)

The Secretary for Innovation and Technology, Mr Nicholas W Yang, visited Tuen Mun Hospital and a secondary school to learn about applications of technologies and implementation of STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) education during his Tuen Mun District visit today (December 18). He also met with District Council members.

Accompanied by the District Officer (Tuen Mun), Ms Aubrey Fung, and the Cluster Chief Executive (New Territories West) of the Hospital Authority, Dr Simon Tang, Mr Yang visited the rehabilitation ward of the Department of Orthopaedics and Traumatology of Tuen Mun Hospital to see the operation of the In-Patient Medication Order Entry System. Developed by the Hospital Authority, the system enables doctors, pharmacists and nurses to prescribe medication, vet prescriptions and verify drugs and dispensing times on the same electronic platform, instead of using manual processing. This helps enhance the accuracy and efficiency of drug dispensing, bringing about extra protection for patients.

At the pharmacy, an officer of the Office of the Government Chief

Information Officer gave an update on the implementation of the Wi-Fi.HK public Wi-Fi service at public hospitals. Through the Public-Private Collaboration programme, free Wi-Fi services have been installed at 12 hospitals so far. Wi-Fi.HK hotspots are available at the Accident and Emergency Department, pharmacy and restaurant at Tuen Mun Hospital. With the adoption of the latest Wi-Fi standard (IEEE 802.11ac) and fibre-based networks, enhancements have been made in connection speed, stability and user experience.

The next stop was Yan Chai Hospital No.2 Secondary School, where Mr Yang got a better grasp of the implementation of STEM education, including a school-based music curriculum integrated with information and communications technology. He also watched a demonstration by students on launching a rocket car powered by air pressure.

An Elder Academy was set up in the school to encourage lifelong learning among the elderly through a wide array of learning platforms. The students also benefit through engagement in the activities, realising intergenerational harmony and rapport. Under the Intergeneration VR Scheme, the students produce immersive videos featuring attractions that enable the elderly to reminisce about their good old days with the aid of virtual reality technology. Mr Yang said he was very pleased to see the students actively participating in STEM activities, which in turn can enrich their learning experience, inspire their innovative minds and train up their problem-solving skills.

Mr Yang met with members of the Tuen Mun District Council to exchange views on innovation and technology and district affairs before concluding his district visit.

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## [Operator and manager of unlicensed guesthouses fined](#)

A man and a woman were fined \$8,000 and \$15,000 at the Eastern Magistrates' Courts today (December 18) for contravening the Hotel and Guesthouse Accommodation Ordinance.

The courts heard that in June this year, officers of the Office of the Licensing Authority (OLA), the Home Affairs Department, inspected two suspected unlicensed guesthouses on Paterson Street in Causeway Bay and Wharf Road in North Point. During the inspections, the OLA officers posed as lodgers and successfully rented rooms in these guesthouses on a daily basis.

According to the OLA's records, these guesthouses did not possess licences under the Ordinance on the days of inspection. The man and the woman

responsible for operating and managing the premises were charged with contravening section 5(1) of the Ordinance.

A department spokesman stressed that operating or managing an unlicensed guesthouse is a criminal offence and will lead to a criminal record. Upon conviction, the offender is liable to a maximum fine of \$200,000 and two years' imprisonment.

The spokesman appealed to anyone with information about suspected unlicensed guesthouses to report it to the OLA through the hotline (Tel: 2881 7498), by email ([hadlaeng@had.gov.hk](mailto:hadlaeng@had.gov.hk)), by fax (2504 5805) using the report form downloaded from the OLA website ([www.hadla.gov.hk](http://www.hadla.gov.hk)), or through the mobile application "Hong Kong Licensed Hotels and Guesthouses".

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## **Contract signed for Central Kowloon Route – Yau Ma Tei West (with photo)**

The Highways Department today (December 18) signed a contract for about \$3,464 million with Build King-SKEC Joint Venture for works in Yau Ma Tei West under the Central Kowloon Route (CKR) project. The works mainly comprise the construction of an approximately 250-metre-long depressed road at the western tunnel portal of the CKR, the construction of a landscaped deck structure of approximately 22,000 square metres above the western tunnel portal and Hoi Wang Road, the construction of approach roads and slip roads connecting the CKR with the existing road networks, and the construction of the re-aligned and regraded Hoi Wang Road and the associated bridges linking to West Kowloon Highway and Lin Cheung Road.

The landscaped deck above the western tunnel portal of the CKR will cover not only the depressed road but also the section of Hoi Wang Road between Yan Cheung Road and Lai Cheung Road, so as to mitigate the impact caused by traffic at the tunnel portal to the adjacent environment. It will also be connected with the landscaped deck of the West Kowloon Station of the Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong High Speed Link, thus forming a grade-separated pedestrian route between Yau Ma Tei and the West Kowloon Station. It will serve as a sitting-out area for public enjoyment.

The CKR is a 4.7-kilometre-long dual three-lane strategic trunk road in Central Kowloon linking the Yau Ma Tei Interchange in West Kowloon with the road network of the Kai Tak Development and Kowloon Bay in East Kowloon. It is anticipated that it will be commissioned in 2025. The CKR will relieve traffic congestion in the road network in Central Kowloon. It is estimated that the journey time between Yau Ma Tei and Kowloon Bay during peak hours will be much reduced from 25 minutes to about 5 minutes. A total of four works contracts including the present one have been awarded under the CKR

project with a total value of about \$15 billion.

