

Government gazettes compulsory testing notice

The Government exercises the power under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) and publishes in the Gazette a compulsory testing notice, which requires any person who had been present at 43 specified places during the specified period (persons subject to compulsory testing) to undergo a COVID-19 nucleic acid test.

In view of a number of cases testing positive, 35 specified places are included in the compulsory testing notice. Furthermore, since some sewage samples collected in Chai Wan, Shau Kei Wan, Wong Tai Sin and Tin Shui Wai have tested positive, eight specified premises are included in the compulsory testing notice. The Government strongly reminds members of the public to strictly follow the compulsory testing requirements and undergo testing on time as required. Mobile specimen collection stations have been set up by the Government in different districts to facilitate testing to be conducted in compliance with the compulsory testing notice. The above compulsory testing requirement applies to those who have completed a COVID-19 vaccination course as well.

Persons who have tested positive in the past three months (including positive cases tested either by nucleic acid tests recorded by the Department of Health (DH) or by rapid antigen tests (RATs) that have been self-declared to the DH) do not need to undergo compulsory testing. For those who are subject to compulsory testing (save for those who have declared their positive RAT results as mentioned above), they must undergo nucleic acid tests in accordance with relevant compulsory testing notices and cannot use RATs to fulfil the requirement of such notices. In other words, a negative RAT result cannot be deemed as fulfilling the compulsory testing requirement. Furthermore, unless a person subject to compulsory testing has obtained a medical certificate proving that he or she is unfit to undergo testing using a sample taken through combined nasal and throat swabs because of health reasons, the person cannot provide a deep throat saliva sample to fulfil the compulsory testing requirement.

Details of the compulsory testing notice are available on the Centre for Health Protection (CHP)'s website via the following link: www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/ctn_20220825.pdf.

If any persons test positive under compulsory testing, such positive cases will be handled in the same manner as in those identified through other nucleic acid tests or self-declared through RATs. Their isolation arrangements (as well as the quarantine arrangements of their household members) are no different from other positive cases.

Persons subject to compulsory testing in accordance with a compulsory testing notice must go to any of the mobile specimen collection stations,

community testing centres (CTCs) or recognised local medical testing institutions to undergo professional swab sampling in fulfilling the requirements for compulsory testing. Young children may continue to undergo the test using a stool specimen. For details on obtaining stool specimen bottles, please refer to the COVID-19 thematic website: www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/Stool_bottle_collection_points.pdf.

If Tropical Cyclone Warning Signal No. 3 or above, the Red or Black Rainstorm Warning Signal or the post-super typhoon "extreme conditions" announcement by the Government is in force at any time during the period for undergoing the compulsory testing, the period for undergoing the compulsory testing will be extended for one day.

The Comirnaty and CoronaVac vaccines are highly effective in preventing severe cases and deaths from COVID-19. They can provide protection to those vaccinated to prevent serious complications and even death after infection. The Government appeals to persons who are not yet vaccinated to get vaccinated without delay. The Government is working towards the goal of boosting the vaccination rates of children, teenagers and the elderly so that they can be protected by the vaccines as early as possible. Furthermore, the Scientific Committee on Vaccine Preventable Diseases and the Scientific Committee on Emerging and Zoonotic Diseases under the CHP of the DH has earlier updated the consensus interim recommendations that a three-dose series of Comirnaty vaccine (each dose is one-tenth of that for an adult) may be administered to children aged six months to under five years; and a three-dose series of CoronaVac vaccine (each dose of the same dosage as that for an adult) for children aged six months to less than three years. Besides, persons aged 50 and above may receive the fourth dose of COVID-19 vaccine after at least three months from the third dose. Members of the public who are eligible should get the fourth dose as early as possible for better protection.

CTCs provide testing services for the public. Booking and walk-in services are available. Members of the public only need to provide simple personal information on the 24-hour booking system (www.communitytest.gov.hk/en). The system shows the booking status of the centres for the coming two weeks to facilitate the public's planning and selection of a suitable testing centre and a time slot for testing. The testing centres will accord priority to serve individuals with advance bookings. As of 6pm today (August 25), there was around 93 per cent availability for booking places for the coming two weeks. Members of the public may call the testing centres for enquiries on the availability of bookings or walk-in quotas before visiting the centres.

In view that some mobile specimen collection stations were closed when the Tropical Cyclone Warning Signal No.3 was in force today, the mobile specimen collection stations at Ma Hang Estate in Stanley, Rhine Garden and Sea Crest Villa in Sham Tseng will resume service tomorrow (August 26) while the service period of the mobile specimen collection station at On Yam Estate in Kwai Chung will be extended to August 27 (Saturday). Separately, ticketing machines have been installed in a number of service points for on-site ticket

arrangement. Members of the public who have obtained a ticket can visit the CTC website (www.communitytest.gov.hk/en) to check the real-time queueing ticket status. Booking service is also provided for some large-scale mobile specimen collection stations, and members of the public may use the 24-hour booking system (www.communitytest.gov.hk/en) to reserve a suitable time slot for testing.

Other than persons subject to compulsory testing, all members of the public may conduct free testing at CTCs or mobile specimen collection stations (if the service scope is applicable). The Government will also continue to provide free nucleic acid testing service for eligible persons of targeted groups, visitors to public hospitals and residential care homes and all elderly people aged 60 or above at CTCs and mobile specimen collection stations. The opening dates and operating hours of the mobile specimen collection stations are stated in the Annex.

Outdoor mobile specimen collection stations will be closed if the Strong Wind Signal No. 3 or Red Rainstorm Warning Signal has been issued, while all mobile specimen collection stations together with all CTCs will be closed when Tropical Cyclone Warning Signal No. 8 or above or the Black Rainstorm Warning Signal is in force. Any changes in the arrangements of testing service will be announced on site, and members of the public may also pay attention to the relevant press releases.

Persons subject to compulsory testing may choose to undergo testing via the following routes:

(a) For tests which require using a sample taken through combined nasal and throat swabs

1. To visit any of the mobile specimen collection stations (see the list and target groups (if applicable)

at www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/early-testing.html) for testing;

2. To attend any of the CTCs (see the list at www.communitytest.gov.hk/en);

3. To self-arrange testing provided by private laboratories which are recognised by the DH and can issue SMS notifications in respect of test results (see the list

at www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/List_of_recognised_laboratories RTPCR.pdf), and the relevant sample must be taken through combined nasal and throat swabs; or

4. To use a specimen bottle distributed to the relevant specified premises by the CHP (if applicable), and return the specimen bottle with the stool sample collected as per relevant guidelines.

(b) For persons holding a medical certificate issued by a registered medical practitioner proving that they are unfit to undergo testing using a sample taken through combined nasal and throat swabs because of health reasons

1. To obtain a deep throat saliva specimen collection pack from post offices, vending machines set up at MTR stations or designated general out-patient clinics (GOPCs) of the Hospital Authority and return the specimen to one of the designated specimen collection points (see the distribution points and times, and the specimen collection points and times,

at www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/early-testing.html);

2. To undergo testing at any of the GOPCs of the Hospital Authority as instructed by a medical professional of the Hospital Authority; or
3. To self-arrange testing provided by private laboratories which are recognised by the DH and can issue SMS notifications in respect of test results.

A Government spokesman cautioned that testing received at the Accident and Emergency Departments of the Hospital Authority, or testing provided by private laboratories which cannot issue SMS notifications in respect of test results, does not comply with the requirements of the aforementioned compulsory testing notice.

"If persons subject to compulsory testing have symptoms, they should seek medical attention immediately and undergo testing as instructed by a medical professional. They should not attend the mobile specimen collection stations or the CTCs."

Persons subject to compulsory testing must keep the SMS notifications containing the result of the test and the relevant medical certificate (if applicable) for checking by a law enforcement officer when the officer requires the persons to provide information about their undergoing the specified test.

Any enquiries on compulsory testing arrangements may be addressed to the hotline at 6275 6901, which operates daily from 9am to 6pm.

The Government will continue to trace possibly infected persons who had been to relevant premises, and seriously verify whether they had complied with the testing notices. Any person who fails to comply with the testing notices commits an offence and the maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine at level 4 (\$25,000) and imprisonment for six months. The fixed penalty for discharging the liability is \$10,000. The person may also be issued with a compulsory testing order requiring him or her to undergo testing within a specified time frame. Any person in breach of the compulsory testing order would be liable to a fine at level 5 (\$50,000) and imprisonment for six months.

The spokesman said, "The Government urges all individuals who are in doubt about their own health conditions, or individuals with infection risks (such as individuals who visited places with epidemic outbreaks or had contact with cases tested positive), to undergo testing promptly for early identification of infected persons."

[Hong Kong actively participates in 4th](#)

Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Conference on Inheritance, Innovation and Development of Traditional Chinese Medicine (with photos)

The Secretary for Health, Professor Lo Chung-mau, attended the 4th Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA) Conference on Inheritance, Innovation and Development of Traditional Chinese Medicine and delivered a speech at the opening ceremony via video conferencing today (August 25).

"Chinese medicine (CM) is an integral part of the healthcare system of Hong Kong. The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government expresses its sincere gratitude to the relevant Mainland ministries and commissions as well as experts for their staunch support and guidance on the development of CM in Hong Kong. The HKSAR Government will further enhance Hong Kong's role under the blueprint set out in the Construction Plan for the Chinese Medicine Highlands in the GBA (2020-2025), actively co-ordinate among stakeholders of Hong Kong's CM sector to integrate into the overall development of CM in the nation and the GBA, and support the implementation of various policies and measures to give full play to Hong Kong's unique advantages," Professor Lo said.

Professor Lo pointed out in his speech that, under the framework of the construction of CM highlands in the GBA, Hong Kong has been making remarkable achievements in areas such as the training and exchange of talents, CM service development, standard setting and industry development of CM drugs. In the future, the co-operation can be further deepened with a view to giving more impetus to the development of CM in Hong Kong. Hong Kong will also fully utilise its important role as the country's window to the international markets in promoting inheritance, innovation and co-operation in CM in the GBA, and playing a more important role in promoting the area of internationalisation and standard setting of CM, among others.

Co-organised by the Traditional Chinese Medicine Bureau of Guangdong Province, the Health Bureau of the HKSAR Government, the Health Bureau of the Macao Special Administrative Region Government and the Zhongshan Municipal People's Government, the conference this year aimed to promote in-depth integration and development of CM in the GBA, and implement the Outline Development Plan for the GBA as well as the Construction Plan for the Chinese Medicine Highlands in the GBA (2020-2025). The main conference venue was in Zhongshan, with attendance covering officials from the National Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine (NATCM), relevant GBA ministries/commissions, academicians, CM masters, CM experts, representatives from enterprises, and more. The participants conducted in-depth exchange,

exploration and co-operation on the theme of "Building CM Highlands in GBA through Inheritance and Innovation".

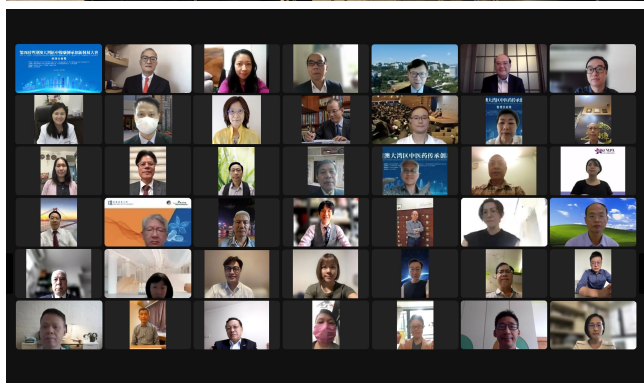
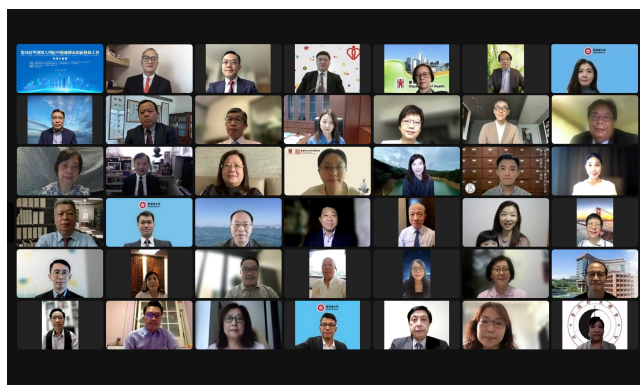
To enable more stakeholders of Hong Kong's CM sector to participate in this major event, the Chinese Medicine Unit of the Health Bureau set up a Hong Kong sub-venue at the Central Government Offices with a live-feed connection to the main venue. Due to inclement weather, the Hong Kong sub-venue switched to a hybrid mode of in-person and remote attendance, recording an attendance of nearly 150 CM stakeholders. Representatives from the Health Bureau, the Department of Health and the Hospital Authority also participated.

In the afternoon, Vice Commissioner of the NATCM Professor Huang Luqi convened the Seminar on Promoting the Development of CM Highlands in GBA, which was attended by relevant government officials and representatives of organisations in the GBA to discuss how to further promote exchanges and co-operation in CM, and the use of CM in the fight against the COVID-19 epidemic, among others.

Professor Lo said, "With the staunch support of the motherland, the HKSAR Government and the CM sector have been working together to take forward a wide range of anti-epidemic work, enabling the in-depth participation of CM in the whole process of epidemic prevention, treatment and rehabilitation, thereby making important contributions to the fight against the epidemic. The HKSAR Government is grateful to the nation for its unwavering support for Hong Kong's anti-epidemic work, including sending a team of CM experts to Hong Kong to offer guidance and assisting Hong Kong in stabilising the supply of anti-epidemic proprietary Chinese medicines.

"The HKSAR Government will continue to step up its efforts in promoting the development of CM and actively participate in the construction of CM highlands in the GBA, as well as strengthen exchanges and co-operation among Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao, so as to join hands in driving the construction of CM highlands in the GBA and integration into the national development of the Healthy China Initiative."





[Public hospitals daily update on COVID-19 cases](#)

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

As at 0.00am today (August 25), a total of 2 234 patients who tested positive for COVID-19 are currently hospitalised for treatment, including 331 new patients. Among the patients staying in isolation facilities, 514 patients are in isolation wards, 196 patients are in second-tier isolation wards, 647 patients are in the North Lantau Hospital Hong Kong Infection Control Centre and 74 patients are in the Treatment Centre for COVID-19 (AsiaWorld-Expo), of which 248 in total are new patients. There are six newly reported critical patients and five newly reported serious patients. There are a total of 40 patients in critical condition and 30 are in serious condition, of which 12 critical patients are receiving intensive care. Moreover, there are 271 patients who have recovered, including 245 patients who have been discharged. In addition, nine patients who passed away in public hospitals were reported.

In the fifth wave of the epidemic, there are 60 916 patients who have recovered so far, including 60 592 patients who have been discharged. And since early 2020, there are 73 296 patients who have recovered, including 72 972 patients who have been discharged.

The Hospital Authority will maintain close contact with the Centre for Health Protection to monitor the latest developments and to inform the public and healthcare workers on the latest information in a timely manner.

Transcript of remarks by SCS at media session

â€œFollowing is the transcript of remarks by the Secretary for the Civil Service, Mrs Ingrid Yeung, at a media session after attending a COVID-19 vaccination event in Kwun Tong this afternoon (August 25):

Reporter: The COVID cases may surpass 10 000 very soon. Any plans to let civil servants work from home to prevent further outbreak? And can you comment on the current vaccination rate in Hong Kong, especially among young children?

Secretary for the Civil Service: The vaccination rate among civil servants is very high. Apart from those who are medically unfit to get vaccinated, all civil servants have been vaccinated according to the number of doses that they should take. So the possibility of having special working arrangements for civil servants is not high. I don't think in the near future we will need to implement such arrangements. As for young children, we have lowered the minimum age for receiving vaccination to 6 months old for about three weeks. And now around 9 000 children aged 6 months to 3 years old have got vaccinated. We are promoting this. I was at a maternal and child health centre two days ago, and we will have further promotion efforts to call upon parents of the children to get their children vaccinated and protected. And we have been seeing higher numbers of vaccination in the recent days, and we hope this trend will continue.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)

CHP investigates locally acquired SARS-CoV-2 virus cases with 2 960 cases tested positive by nucleic acid

tests and 5 322 cases by RATs verified as well as 297 imported cases

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (August 25) announced the latest epidemic situation of COVID-19. As of 0.00am, August 25, the CHP was investigating 8 282 additional locally acquired cases that tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus, comprising 2 960 cases that tested positive by nucleic acid tests (1 414 confirmed cases, 1 269 asymptomatic cases and 277 cases with pending status) and 5 322 cases that tested positive by rapid antigen tests (RATs) verified in the past 24 hours.

Separately, 297 additional imported cases were reported, including 258 cases that tested positive by nucleic acid tests (four confirmed cases, 165 asymptomatic cases and 89 cases with pending status) and 39 cases that tested positive by RATs.

Hong Kong has recorded a total of 871 104 and 616 868 cases that have tested positive by nucleic acid tests and RATs respectively for the SARS-CoV-2 virus so far.

The CHP is continuing with epidemiological investigations of the cases. Please refer to the "COVID-19 Thematic Website" (www.coronavirus.gov.hk) for more information.

Among the specimens received by the DH's Public Health Laboratory Services Branch during August 16 to 22 for verification testing of local cases, about 8.5 per cent and 35.9 per cent of them (seven-day moving average) are related to the sub-lineages BA.2.12.1 and BA.4/BA.5 (including suspected cases) of the Omicron mutant strain respectively.

In addition, as of 0.00am, August 25, a total of 9 430 death cases that had tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus during the fifth wave (since December 31, 2021) were recorded, with 9 349 and 78 deaths reported from the Hospital Authority and public mortuaries respectively as well as three deaths reported from the Chinese University of Hong Kong Medical Centre. Hong Kong has so far recorded a total of 9 643 death cases that tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus.

Furthermore, among the earlier cases by nucleic acid tests reported, there were cases (including pending cases) changed to confirmed, asymptomatic or re-positive cases. As at yesterday (August 24), the total number of confirmed cases was 376 721, while the figures for asymptomatic cases, re-positive cases and pending/unknown cases recorded since January 1 were 253 363, 31 and 237 771 respectively.

The spokesman for the CHP stressed that the local situation of COVID-19 infection is severe with the number of cases tested positive growing at an increased pace. The CHP strongly appeals to the community to strictly comply

with social distancing measures and refrain from participating in unnecessary or crowded activities or mass gatherings. This would lower the risk of infection and prevent the virus from spreading in the community.

â€‹The spokesman reminded the public that COVID-19 vaccines are highly effective in preventing severe cases and deaths from the SARS-CoV-2 virus. They can provide effective protection to those vaccinated in preventing serious complications and even death after infection. People who have yet to receive vaccination, especially senior citizens, chronic patients, children, and other immunocompromised persons who face a higher chance of death after COVID-19 infection, should get vaccinated as early as possible for self-protection and to reduce the risk of falling seriously ill and death should they get infected.