

[Tin Shui Wai Hospital appeals to public for missing patient](#)

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The spokesperson for Tin Shui Hospital (TSWH) made the following appeal today (July 27) regarding a patient who left the hospital without notifying hospital staff:

A 69-year-old female patient left the Accident and Emergency Department of TSWH without notifying hospital staff at around 3:30pm today.

Hospital staff arranged security guards to conduct searching in hospital and the vicinity area immediately but were unable to locate the patient. TSWH is very concerned about the incident and has reported to the Police. The hospital will cooperate with the Police for the search.

The patient is about 1.7 meters tall, fat-built, with black short hair. According to CCTV footage, she was wearing black and red striped top with long red skirt when leaving TSWH. The hospital appeals to the public to contact Tin Shui Wai Police Station at 3661 4800 if they know the whereabouts of the patient.

[Inter-departmental task force continues to take forward measures to support residential care homes in handling COVID-19 developments](#)

A spokesman for the Labour and Welfare Bureau (LWB) today (July 27) said that the Inter-departmental Task Force to Enhance Residential Care Homes (RCHs)' Capabilities in Epidemic Fight led by the LWB continues to review the progress of various improvement measures, with a view to strengthening the protection and support to RCHs in handling the developments of the epidemic.

Building barriers to protect RCHs

For ventilation improvement, upon the Task Force's steer, the Social Welfare Department (SWD) in co-ordination with the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD) and the Buildings Department completed inspections to over 700 private/self-financing RCHs and contract homes operated by

private organisations in Hong Kong in end-June. RCHs' ventilation equipment were checked if they met applicable requirements, and improvement recommendations were made for RCHs. Short-term recommendations included the addition of air purifiers, installation of window-mount exhaust fans, etc, while medium- to long-term recommendations included the installation of door louvre, exhaust air ducts with exhaust fans, etc. The SWD will collaborate with the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust again, with the Trust providing funding support for the RCHs to implement improvement recommendations concerned.

On vaccination for RCH residents, the Government has recruited additional medical teams to participate in outreach vaccination. A special programme has been launched from July 25, under which medical teams are invited to visit their matched RCHs at least once a week to provide outreach vaccination service for a period of six weeks. The Government will also provide a special allowance to cover the additional manpower and transportation costs. Currently, the vaccination rates for the first and second doses among RCH residents are about 93 per cent and 87 per cent respectively, while that for the third dose is about 40 per cent. The next-stage target is to increase the vaccination rate of the third dose to at least 50 per cent by end-September, in accordance with the principle that persons suitable for vaccination should get vaccinated.

To strengthen the protection to RCH residents, the testing requirements for RCH staff and visitors will be adjusted. From the 73rd round of compulsory testing commencing today, all RCH staff irrespective of their vaccination status are required to take polymerase chain reaction-based nucleic acid tests (PCR tests) once every seven days. The Government's contractors will deliver PCR testing kits to RCHs to facilitate the staff to complete the tests by taking self-administered specimens, and will collect the specimens. RCH staff can also choose to take free-of-charge tests at the Community Testing Centres or mobile specimen collection stations and will be accorded priority. In addition, from August 1, all RCH visitors will be required to provide negative PCR test results obtained within 48 hours before the visits. From August 28, the vaccination requirements for visitors will be enhanced to the latest requirements of the Vaccine Pass. Persons yet to fulfil the Vaccine Pass requirements should get vaccinated as soon as possible.

Strengthening support to RCHs

The SWD's one-stop e-platform launched from June 13 has been in smooth operation. RCHs report anti-epidemic-related information daily, assisting the Government in closely monitoring the developments of the epidemic. The dedicated RCH hotline activated by the SWD in collaboration with the Department of Health (DH), the Hospital Authority (HA) and the Fire Services Department since July 1 has been handling RCHs' requests for assistance promptly. Generally, cases received through the hotline were resolved on the same day.

The DH and the HA have formulated a standing contingency plan for liaising with RCHs and enabling efficient triage of RCH residents to

treatment/isolation/quarantine facilities. The HA's Community Geriatric Assessment Team and liaison mechanism in each of its clusters also provide support to RCHs for the elderly and RCHs for persons with disabilities respectively.

Handling developments of the epidemic

Upon the Task Force's steer, holding centres (HCs) / quarantine centres (QCs) have been reactivated timely. The HCs at the Shek Kip Mei Park Sports Centre and Siu Sai Wan Sports Centre have commenced operation from June 25, with a total of about 340 beds providing isolation and care services to confirmed RCH residents who are asymptomatic or showing mild symptoms. The six halls in the AsiaWorld-Expo managed by the SWD are used as QCs for RCH residents being close contacts. With the QC at the Kai Tak Cruise Terminal in standby mode, a total of about 1 750 QC beds are available. The Task Force will continue to identify HC/QC venues.

For treatment facilities, the HA has enhanced co-ordination among its clusters to provide a total of about 12 000 beds, ensuring that confirmed patients will receive timely treatment.

The LWB spokesman said that the RCH sector is the Government's key partner in the epidemic fight. The Government expressed gratitude to RCH operators and practitioners for their tireless efforts and active co-operation in implementing various anti-epidemic measures. The Government will continue to maintain communication and join hands with the sector in handling the epidemic and protecting RCH residents.

The Task Force comprises representatives from the LWB, the Health Bureau, the Development Bureau, the SWD, the DH, the EMSD and the HA.

Public hospitals daily update on COVID-19 cases

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

As at 0.00am today (July 27), a total of 1 390 patients who tested positive for COVID-19 are currently hospitalised for treatment, including 162 new patients. Among the patients staying in isolation facilities, 429 patients are in isolation wards, 25 patients are in second-tier isolation wards and 429 patients are in the North Lantau Hospital Hong Kong Infection Control Centre, of which 121 in total are new patients. There are four newly reported critical patients and seven newly reported serious patients. There are a total of 28 patients in critical condition and 19 are in serious condition, of which eight critical patients are receiving intensive care. Moreover, there are 185 patients who have recovered, including 168 patients

who have been discharged. In addition, 10 patients who passed away in public hospitals were reported.

In the fifth wave of the epidemic, there are 54 962 patients who have recovered so far, including 54 710 patients who have been discharged. And since early 2020, there are 67 342 patients who have recovered, including 67 090 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.

CHP investigates locally acquired SARS-CoV-2 virus cases with 1 763 cases tested positive by nucleic acid tests and 2 525 cases by RATs verified as well as 220 imported cases

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (July 27) announced the latest epidemic situation of COVID-19. As of 0.00am, July 27, the CHP was investigating 4 288 additional locally acquired cases tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus, including 1 763 cases tested positive by nucleic acid tests (764 confirmed cases, 809 asymptomatic cases and 190 cases with pending case status) and 2 525 cases tested positive by rapid antigen tests (RATs) verified in the past 24 hours.

Separately, 220 additional imported cases were reported, including 203 cases tested positive by nucleic acid tests (22 confirmed cases, 168 asymptomatic cases and 13 cases with pending case status) and 17 cases tested positive by RATs.

Hong Kong has recorded a total of 813 057 and 521 850 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 on the cases. Please refer to the "COVID-19 Thematic Website" (www.coronavirus.gov.hk) for more information.

Meanwhile, according to the analysis by the DH's Public Health Laboratory Services Branch, as of yesterday (July 26), Hong Kong had recorded a total of 19 cases, 2 238 cases and 2 308 cases carrying the sub-lineages BA.2.12, BA.2.12.1 and BA.4/BA.5 under the Omicron mutant strain respectively

(including suspected cases), among which zero, 1 993 and 930 of them are local cases.

In addition, as of 0.00am, July 27, a total of 9 275 death cases that had tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus during the fifth wave (since December 31, 2021) were recorded, with 9 196 and 76 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 9 488 death cases that have 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, the total number of confirmed cases was 351 966, while the figures for asymptomatic cases, re-positive cases and pending/unknown cases recorded since January 1 were 225 159, 24 and 233 942 respectively.

The spokesman for the CHP stressed that as the local situation of COVID-19 infection is still severe, the CHP strongly appeals to the community to continue to comply with social distancing measures, avoid going out and refrain from participating in unnecessary or crowded activities or gatherings. This would lower the risk of infection and prevent the virus from spreading in the community.

â€‹â€‹The spokesman reminded 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 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.

Labour Department strengthens inspection to ensure adequate measures taken by employers to protect employees from heat stroke

As the weather has been very hot recently, the Labour Department (LD) is highly concerned about the risk of heat stroke among employees (especially those engaged in outdoor work) and has stepped up relevant inspection and enforcement action to protect employees' occupational health.

A spokesman for the LD said, "The LD conducts inspections every summer targeting industries (such as construction, cleaning, security and horticulture industries) with a higher risk of heat stroke. The purpose is to ensure that employers have conducted risk assessments on heat stress in accordance with the guideline issued by the LD and have taken appropriate occupational safety and health (OSH) measures. The LD has already commenced large-scale inspections this summer."

According to the general duty provisions of the Occupational Safety and Health Ordinance (Cap. 509), employers must provide their employees with a work environment and system of work that is safe and without risks to health. To this end, employers have to conduct risk assessments on heat stress at work and take appropriate OSH measures to protect employees from heat stroke at work.

In order to assist employers in conducting risk assessment on heat stress, the LD has published guideline on "Risk Assessment for the Prevention of Heat Stroke at Work". The guideline lists out the heat stress risk factors that employers need to consider and set out corresponding risk-mitigating measures for employers to adopt in order to reduce the risk of heat stroke among employees.

"If inspections conducted by LD officers reveal that employers have failed to conduct risk assessments in accordance with the guideline, or have not taken appropriate preventive measures in response to the assessment results, they will follow up in accordance with the general duty provisions of the Occupational Safety and Health Ordinance and demand immediate improvement. Prosecution will be initiated depending on the seriousness of the case and the evidence available," the spokesman emphasised.

The inspecting officers will check strictly whether employers have considered the various factors listed in the guideline, including temperature, humidity, sunlight exposure, air flow and workload, to carry out the required risk assessment, and whether they have taken corresponding preventive measures, such as providing employees with adequate drinking water, scheduling work to cooler times, arranging more frequent rest periods and ensuring that the workplace is well ventilated.

The LD will strictly enforce the law to ensure that employers comply with the general duty provisions of the Occupational Safety and Health Ordinance and take appropriate measures to reduce the risk of heat stroke for employees at work. Offenders are liable to a maximum fine of \$200,000 and imprisonment for six months.

The LD reminds employers that they must conduct risk assessments on heat stress with reference to the guideline issued by the LD and take corresponding OSH measures to comply with legal requirements and to protect workers' health.