

## **SFST's statement**

The Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury, Mr Christopher Hui, today (January 7), said, "I and the Under Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury, Mr Joseph Chan, briefly stayed at a birthday gathering on January 3 evening. There were participants of the gathering tested or tested preliminarily positive for SARS-CoV-2 virus involving mutant strains, we therefore will proceed to undergo quarantine at the Penny's Bay Quarantine Centre in accordance with the arrangement of the Centre for Health Protection."

"Hong Kong is currently facing severe epidemic situation. I and Joseph apologise to the community for the additional burden to the anti-epidemic work caused by the incident. We will attach utmost importance to fighting virus and step up vigilance in the future."

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## **Tuen Mun Hospital announces a preliminarily tested positive paediatric patient leaving cubicle unsupervised incident**

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The spokesman for Tuen Mun Hospital (TMH) made the following announcement today (January 7) regarding a preliminarily tested positive paediatric patient leaving the isolation cubicle unsupervised:

A 4-year-old girl, isolated in Penny's Bay Quarantine Centre, was sent to the Accident and Emergency Department (AED) of TMH by ambulance for running nose on January 5 evening. The girl was then transferred to a paediatric ward for treatment under isolation. She tested preliminarily positive for COVID-19 today.

The girl was arranged to stay on a child cot with cot side rail up and provided with a call bell to call for assistance from staff.

At around 8pm last night (January 6), the girl walked out of the isolation cubicle and stood in the corridor without wearing a mask. A nurse noticed and assisted her to return to the cubicle immediately.

TMH conducted an investigation and confirmed that a nurse and a patient care assistant only wore N95 respirator and surgical mask respectively

without face shields when getting in contact with the girl. The two staff members were identified as close contact and 21-day-quarantine will be arranged after TMH's discussion with the Centre for Health Protection (CHP).

The girl was transferred to the Hospital Authority Infectious Disease Centre located in Princess Margaret Hospital for isolation and treatment this morning with stable condition.

Thorough disinfection has been conducted in the area concerned in TMH. The hospital will continue to closely monitor the health condition of staff members and communicate with the CHP on the latest situation.

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## **Government makes “restriction-testing declaration” and issues compulsory testing notice in respect of specified “restricted area” in Causeway Bay**

The Government today (January 7) exercised the power under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) to make a "restriction-testing declaration" (declaration) effective from 9pm, under which people (hereafter referred to as "persons subject to compulsory testing") within the specified "restricted area" in Causeway Bay (i.e. Mayland Court, 1-7 Shelter Street, Causeway Bay, excluding the shops at G/F of Mayland Court. See Annex) are required to stay in their premises and undergo compulsory testing. Persons subject to compulsory testing are required to stay in their premises until all such persons identified in the "restricted area" have undergone testing and the test results are mostly ascertained. The Government aims at finishing this exercise at about 7am tomorrow (January 8).

A Government spokesman said, "The Government discovered that the sewage discharged from the above building was tested positive in the sewage testing conducted earlier in the area. It is suspected that there are asymptomatic patients in the building. After risk assessment, we think it is necessary to issue a restriction-testing declaration and compulsory testing notice for the 'restricted area' to confirm all persons in the 'restricted area' have undergone compulsory testing, so as to break the transmission chain in the district and dispel the worries of residents in the district."

The Government will arrange dedicated staff to collect samples through combined nasal and throat swabs at the "restricted area" and request persons subject to compulsory testing to undergo testing before 1am tomorrow. Persons subject to compulsory testing must stay at their place of residence until all test results are ascertained to avoid cross-infection risk.

The Government spokesman said, "We understand that this exercise will cause inconvenience to the public. The Government has made arrangements to carry out testing for all persons present in the 'restricted area' as soon as possible. The aim is to strive to complete testing of all identified persons subject to compulsory testing and confirm the results, and finish the exercise at around 7am tomorrow. The Government will make a public announcement when the declaration expires officially. In the cases in which employees are unable to go to work because of the declaration, the Government hopes their employers can exercise discretion and not deduct the salaries or benefits of the employees."

If staying in the "restricted area" will cause unreasonable hardship to individuals who are not residents in the area when the declaration takes effect, government officers may exercise discretion and allow that person to leave the area after considering the individual circumstances. That person must have followed the instructions to undergo testing and leave his/her personal information for contact purposes.

Persons in the "restricted area" who have undergone testing from January 5, 2022 to January 7, 2022, and are able to provide the SMS notification through a mobile phone or related certification containing the test results, are not required to take the test again. However, they are required to stay in their premises until all such persons identified in the area have undergone testing and the test results are mostly ascertained. Also, according to the compulsory testing notice to be issued today, any person who had been present at the above building for more than two hours from December 15, 2021 to January 7, 2022, even if they were not present in the "restricted area" at the time when the declaration took effect, must undergo compulsory testing on or before January 9, 2022. As a mutant strain is involved, for prudence's sake, vaccinated persons are also required to undergo testing.

The Home Affairs Department has set up a hotline (Tel: 2835 1473) which starts operation at 9pm today for residents restricted by the declaration to make enquiries and seek assistance. The Social Welfare Department will also provide assistance to the affected persons.

The Government appeals to persons subject to compulsory testing for their full co-operation by registering and undergoing testing, and waiting for the results patiently at home. The Government will strictly follow up on whether the persons concerned have complied with the compulsory testing notices and "restriction-testing declaration". Any person who fails to comply with the compulsory testing notices commits an offence and may be fined a fixed penalty of \$5,000. The person would also be issued with a compulsory testing order requiring him or her to undergo testing within a specified time frame. Failure to comply with the compulsory testing order or the "restriction-testing declaration" is an offence and the offender would be liable to a fine at level 4 (\$25,000) and imprisonment for six months.

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## **Public hospitals daily update on COVID-19 cases**

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

As at 9am today (January 7), no patient who had tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus was discharged from hospital in the last 24 hours. So far, a total of 12 235 patients have been discharged.

A total of 348 patients who had tested positive are currently hospitalised in the North Lantau Hospital Hong Kong Infection Control Centre, the Hospital Authority (HA) Infectious Disease Centre and the Community Treatment Facility at AsiaWorld-Expo. Among those patients, one is in serious condition (case number: 12548) while the remainder are in stable condition.

The HA 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.

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## **CHP investigates 17 confirmed and 16 asymptomatic additional SARS-CoV-2 virus cases and 83 additional Omicron cases**

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (January 7) announced the latest epidemic situation of COVID-19. As of 0.00am, January 7, the CHP was investigating 17 additional confirmed cases and 16 additional asymptomatic cases in the past 24 hours (i.e. there were 33 additional cases tested positive for SARS-CoV-2 virus confirmed by the Public Health Laboratory Services Branch (PHLSB) in those 24 hours). This brings a total number of confirmed cases to 12 749 so far and starting from January 1 recorded 116 asymptomatic cases. Hong Kong has recorded a total of 12 865 cases tested positive for SARS-CoV-2 virus so far.

With higher transmissibility and risk of infection of the Omicron mutant strain, the CHP strongly appeals to the community to comply with the recently tightened social distancing measures in the next two weeks, and to refrain from participating in unnecessary or crowded activities or gathering (particularly religious or cross-family activities and gatherings). This would lower the risk of infection and prevent the virus from spreading in the community.

The newly reported cases consist of 26 imported cases and seven cases epidemiologically linked with imported case. 28 of the cases involved mutant strains, mutation test results of three cases are pending, while the viral load of the remaining two cases is insufficient for mutation tests. The patients comprise nine males and 24 females, aged four months to 73.

The seven cases epidemiologically linked with imported case are 12838 (37-year-old female), 12839 (63-year-old male), 12840 (67-year-old female), 12841 (62-year-old female), 12854 (51-year-old female), 12860 (73-year-old female) and 12864 (49-year-old female). The CHP has announced the details of cases 12838 and 12841 on January 5 ([www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202201/05/P2022010500820.htm](http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202201/05/P2022010500820.htm)) and details of cases 12839, 12840, 12854, 12860 and 12864 yesterday (January 6) ([www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202201/06/P2022010600822.htm](http://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202201/06/P2022010600822.htm)).

A total of 281 cases tested positive for SARS-CoV-2 virus have been reported in the past 14 days (December 24, 2021, to January 6, 2022). Eighteen of them are epidemiologically linked with imported cases/possibly import-related cases, while the rest are imported cases.

Meanwhile, the whole genome sequencing analysis of cases announced earlier conducted by the PHLSB confirmed that cases 12616, 12653, 12657 to 12666, 12669, 12671, 12672, 12678 to 12690, 12692 to 12707, 12709, 12711 to 12718, 12720, 12722 to 12725, 12727 to 12731, 12733 to 12744, 12746, 12747, 12754, 12755, 12767, 12785, 12805 and 12806 all carried the Variant of Concern Omicron. Together with the aforementioned cases, there are so far 223 cases involving Omicron in Hong Kong.

Also, as the passenger flight (QR818) operated by Qatar Airways arriving in Hong Kong from Doha, Qatar, on January 5, 2022 had eight passengers who tested positive upon arrival, the DH thus invoked the Prevention and Control of Disease (Regulation of Cross-boundary Conveyances and Travellers) Regulation (Cap. 599H) to prohibit the landing of passenger flights in Hong Kong from Doha operated by Qatar Airways from January 7 to 20, 2022.

According to the testing and quarantine arrangements for cases with mutant strains, the CHP reminded that persons who resided or worked within the same building as the residence of relevant cases will be subject to compulsory testing on specified dates in accordance with the announcement by the DH. They will also be required to undergo self-monitoring until the 21st day (see the details of the buildings and dates of testing at [www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/CTN\\_Specified\\_premises\\_and\\_Dates\\_of\\_Testing.pdf](http://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/CTN_Specified_premises_and_Dates_of_Testing.pdf)).

The CHP's epidemiological investigations and relevant contact tracing on the reported cases are ongoing. For case details and contact tracing information, please see the Annex or the "COVID-19 Thematic Website" ([www.coronavirus.gov.hk](http://www.coronavirus.gov.hk)).

The spokesman for the CHP stressed, "The global situation of COVID-19 infection remains severe and there is a continuous increase in the number of

cases involving mutant strains that carry higher transmissibility, and there are also reports of breakthrough infections in some vaccinated individuals. The CHP strongly urges members of the public to avoid all non-essential travel outside Hong Kong, in particular to specified places with high risk under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Regulation of Cross-boundary Conveyances and Travellers) Regulation (Cap. 599H)."