

CE inspects virus tests for staff of residential care home for the elderly (with photos)

The Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, visited a residential care home for the elderly in Tsz Wan Shan today (July 14) to inspect COVID-19 tests arranged by the Government for staff members working at residential care homes for the elderly.

At the residential care home for the elderly in Tsz Wan Shan, Mrs Lam was briefed by the person-in-charge of Sunrise Diagnostic Centre Limited, established by BGI Genomics, on the arrangements and procedures for collecting throat swab samples for COVID-19 tests for about 80 staff members of the elderly home. Today is the first day that the Government, together with the testing institution, conducted virus tests for staff members of residential care homes for the elderly, residential care homes for persons with disabilities and nursing homes. With the experience gained, the tests will be extended to all care institutions in Hong Kong as soon as possible.

Noting that the epidemic in Hong Kong has become more severe at the beginning of this month, with soaring numbers of local infection cases and the emergence of confirmed cases in a residential care home for the elderly for the first time, Mrs Lam said that the Government has rolled out various measures to curb the disease in the past days. Among them, the Government will conduct virus tests for four high-risk groups, including staff members of residential care homes for the elderly, residential care homes for persons with disabilities as well as nursing homes; staff members of restaurants; taxi drivers and employees of property management. The goal is to strengthen detection in the community for identification of asymptomatic patients to achieve "early identification, early isolation and early treatment of the infected", thus reduce the risk of spreading the virus in society.

"The Government has been striving to enhance the testing capabilities by various means. With the increase in equipment and manpower, the public sector may increase the number of tests to 8 000 next month, and if necessary, procure testing services directly from local private laboratories to cope with the needs of the Centre for Health Protection for epidemic management. Nevertheless, in order to enhance the testing capabilities in the community, while taking into account the demand for virus tests by cross-boundary travellers with the implementation of the health code system in the future, we have to extend the scale of private testing services in Hong Kong. I would like to express my gratitude for the participation of the private institutions, which contribute to the fight against the disease in Hong Kong," Mrs Lam said.

