

CE visits community testing centres in various districts (with photos/video)

The Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, visited personnel on duty at five community testing centres in various districts across the city this morning (February 12), the first day of the Lunar New Year, to thank them for their hard work in serving members of the public during the holidays. She also extended New Year greetings to staff members and other people at the community testing centres.

Accompanied by the Secretary for Food and Health, Professor Sophia Chan, Mrs Lam visited community testing centres at Shek Tong Tsui Sports Centre in Central and Western District, Wai Tsuen Sports Centre in Tsuen Wan, Lai King Community Hall, Ma On Shan Sports Centre and Morse Park Sports Centre in Wong Tai Sin to learn more about their operations during the Lunar New Year. She was pleased to note that the community testing centres have been operating smoothly, with staff members conversant with work procedures and appropriate anti-epidemic measures put in place inside and outside the centres, with an orderly arrangement in place for people undergoing tests.

The five community testing centres visited by Mrs Lam are operated by five private testing agencies, which have been helping the Government to provide free compulsory tests and tests for target groups as well as self-paid services to tens of thousands of people over the past few months. They are vital partners of the Government in the fight against the epidemic. Since last November, the testing agencies have conducted some 900 000 tests at various community testing centres and have identified about 900 confirmed cases for follow-up by the Centre for Health Protection. Mrs Lam said that the testing agencies played an important role in the intensive "restriction-testing declaration" operations conducted by the Government over the past two weeks. They were required to set up specimen collection stations at the relevant locations within a short period of time, and complete testing and release testing results within a specified time frame in order to minimise the impact of the operations on members of the public. During the 26 "restriction-testing declaration" operations, the testing agencies conducted virus tests for about 25 000 members of the public in total, identifying 20 confirmed cases.

During her visit, Mrs Lam expressed gratitude to the staff members of the testing agencies, and members of the Government, who manage the venues for continuing to serve the public during the holidays. She also thanked members of the public who took tests at the centres for their participation, noting that they underwent tests mainly to meet the needs of their workplaces.

"Although the local epidemic situation has gradually eased, we cannot let up on testing. All 19 community testing centres will continue to operate during the holidays. While the Government is gearing up for the vaccination

programme, virus testing is still crucial in the fight against the disease. I appeal to people to take tests, regardless of whether they are subject to compulsory testing or fall within the target groups, to contribute to the fight against the epidemic.

"Many people still have to work to fight the virus during the Lunar New Year holidays. I hope that members of the public can also show support with actions such as going out less, avoiding gatherings during the holidays and maintaining personal hygiene, so that Hong Kong can get through the epidemic early and people's normal lives can resume as soon as possible," said Mrs Lam.

