

# CHP follows up on case of Candida auris

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (September 17) following up on a case of Candida auris involving a resident of a residential care home for the elderly (RCHE), and reminded members of the public on the proper use of antimicrobials and maintaining personal hygiene against infection.

The patient was an 89-year-old woman with underlying illnesses who lived in an RCHE. She was admitted to Yan Chai Hospital (YCH) on July 4 for her underlying illnesses. Candida auris was detected from the culture of her combined axilla, groin and nasal swab taken on admission screening in YCH. The patient passed away on July 20 due to other medical condition.

Officers of the CHP conducted a site visit to the RCHE concerned today, and the RCHE was advised to adopt necessary infection control measures. Investigation by the CHP is ongoing.

A spokesman for the CHP explained that Candida is a fungus commonly found in the natural environment, particularly in moist and warm environments. In humans, it is commonly found in body sites such as the oral cavity, the digestive tract, skin and the vagina. It is a common fungus living on or in the human body but can occasionally cause infections, especially in individuals with impaired immunity.

Among the different candida species, Candida auris is more drug-resistant. Infections vary from being mild to potentially life-threatening or fatal, depending on which part of the body is affected and the general health condition of the patient.

The spokesman stressed that proper use of antimicrobials and maintaining personal hygiene, especially hand hygiene, are crucial to the prevention of emergence and cross-transmission of Candida auris.