

CHP follows up on cases tested positive and cases tested preliminarily positive for SARS-CoV-2 virus of Block 1, Tropicana Gardens, Wong Tai Sin and Fu Keung House, Tai Wo Hau Estate

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (January 24) said as two cases tested positive and a case tested preliminarily positive for SARS-CoV-2 virus recently occurred at Block 1, Tropicana Gardens, Wong Tai Sin which involved units E at three different floors as well as a case tested positive and a case tested preliminarily positive for SARS-CoV-2 virus recently occurred at Fu Keung House, Tai Wo Hau Estate which involved units 23 at two different floors, the CHP is proactively following up to investigate whether the infection of the cases in the two buildings are related to environmental factors, so as to stop the potential risk of further spread of the virus.

Since some sewage samples collected in the specified area in Wong Tai Sin have tested positive, all relevant buildings within the specified area are covered by a compulsory testing notice on January 21. Cases 13382 and 13400 were tested positive and initial testing results show that the cases carry the Delta variant. The two patients live in units E on different floors at Block 1, Tropicana Gardens, Wong Tai Sin. The CHP today has found another case tested preliminarily positive involving a 26-year-old male resident in unit E on another floor. He developed symptoms on January 15 and attended a private doctor on January 18 and 22. He underwent compulsory testing yesterday in accordance with relevant requirement and his sample tested preliminarily positive with a Ct value of 34. The patient keeps a hamster at home. His colleague is case 13381 announced today and initial testing results show that the case carries the Delta variant as well.

The CHP has co-ordinated with related government departments and experts and conducted an inspection today of the floors and units concerned at Block 1, Tropicana Gardens, Wong Tai Sin to investigate and examine if environmental factors were involved in the infection of the cases. The CHP took into account the opinions from experts, who preliminarily considered that upward transmission of virus via pipes is involved. The CHP will issue quarantine orders to asymptomatic residents of unit E on all floors of Block 1, Tropicana Gardens, Wong Tai Sin who resided there during the incubation period of the relevant cases and transfer them to a quarantine facility; symptomatic residents will be sent to the hospital for treatment.

Furthermore, the experts have also conducted an inspection at Fu Keung House, Tai Wo Hau Estate. In view of case 13146 tested positive earlier

resided in unit 423 of Fu Keung House, Tai Wo Hau Estate, the Government made a "restriction-testing declaration" for the building on January 23 and no case that tested positive was found. The CHP today has found another case tested preliminarily positive involving an 11-year-old girl residing at unit 323. She developed symptoms on January 23 and attended a hospital on the same day and her sample tested preliminarily positive. Experts preliminarily opined that downward transmission of virus via pipes is involved. As the pipes of the units concerned are connected to those of adjacent units, the CHP will issue quarantine orders to residents of units 321 and 421 at Fu Keung House.

The CHP reminded members of the public to ensure household environmental hygiene by maintaining drainage pipes properly and regularly (about once a week) by pouring about half a litre of water into each drain outlet (U-trap). They should also pay attention to hygiene when using the toilet by putting the toilet lid down before flushing to avoid spreading germs.

According to the testing and quarantine arrangements for cases with mutant strains, 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).

â€‹The CHP strongly reminded members of the public to strictly follow the compulsory testing requirements and undergo the multiple tests on time as required. The compulsory testing requirement applies to those who have completed a COVID-19 vaccination course as well. The Government will seriously verify whether they have complied with the testing notices. Any person who fails to comply with the 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 order is an offence and the offender would be liable to a fine at level 4 (\$25,000) and imprisonment for six months. Relevant officers of different government departments are empowered to perform certain functions under the relevant Regulations under the Prevention and Control of Disease Ordinance (Cap. 599), including requesting individuals to provide information and assistance when necessary. Any person who fails to comply with the relevant request commits an offence and would be liable to a fine at level 3 (\$10,000). The Government reiterates that the aim of issuing a compulsory testing notice is to stop the spread of COVID-19 in the community as soon as possible to protect overall public health and safety.