

CHP follows up on cluster of Candida auris carrier cases

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (August 12) following up on a cluster of Candida auris carrier cases [announced earlier](#) involving a residential care home for the elderly (RCHE) in Sha Tin, with a new case recorded. The CHP reminded members of the public about the proper use of antimicrobials and maintaining personal hygiene against infection.

The CHP received notification from the Hospital Authority (HA) that an 83-year-old male resident of the aforementioned RCHE, who was earlier admitted to Prince of Wales Hospital, was confirmed to have carried Candida auris upon testing. The patient, with underlying illnesses, has no symptoms of infection and is in stable condition. Epidemiological investigations by the CHP revealed that the patient shared the same room with one of the cases (another 83-year-old male patient) of the cluster at the RCHE that was earlier announced (involving two cases related to clusters of Candida auris cases in Prince of Wales Hospital and Shatin Hospital as well as one infection case at the RCHE). Currently, the Candida auris carrier cases cluster of the RCHE concerned involves two patients, including the case announced today. The two other patients earlier announced had passed away due to their underlying medical conditions.

The CHP has immediately carried out follow-up actions and site inspection at the RCHE, and found that the physical limitations at the RCHE have contributed to the transmission of Candida auris in the RCHE. In light of the new case in the RCHE, the CHP has informed the Social Welfare Department and the Community Geriatric Assessment Team of the HA to strengthen the relevant support to the RCHE and assist the RCHE to implement appropriate infection control measures. The epidemiological investigation of the CHP is ongoing.

Apart from the follow-up measures mentioned above, the CHP has again provided infection control advice and training to staff of the RCHE. The RCHE is advised to follow the prevailing guidelines to enhance infection control measures, including appropriate placement of carrier residents, strict implementation of contact precautions, enhancement of environmental cleansing and disinfection, and the use of dedicated medical equipment, toilet and bathing facilities, to prevent the spread of Candida auris. The CHP will keep in close liaison with the RCHE concerned, monitor the situation of the residents and ensure the RCHE has carried out the various infection control measures.

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, the 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.

â€œAmong 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 the emergence and cross-transmission of Candida auris.