

CHP follows up on COVID-19 confirmed cases of Block 6 of Richland Gardens

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (December 10) said as seven confirmed cases of COVID-19 recently occurred at Block 6 of Richland Gardens, which involved units D at four different floors, the CHP is proactively following up to investigate whether the infections of the cases are related, so as to stop the potential risk of further spread of the virus.

The CHP has co-ordinated with related Government departments and organisations and conducted a site inspection this morning to different floors and the concerned units D of Block 6 to investigate and examine if environmental factors were involved in the infection of the cases.

Taking into account the opinions from experts, the CHP decided to carry out prudent measures on infection control before the relevant departments completed their inspection of the vent pipes at the toilets at Block 6. The DH will issue quarantine orders to all asymptomatic residents of all units D of Block 6 and transfer them to quarantine centres; symptomatic residents will be sent to the hospital for treatment.

The Government has exercised power under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) to require any person who had been present at Block 6, units E on all floors of Block 4 and units D on all floors of Block 18 of Richland Gardens for more than two hours at any time during the period from November 20 to December 10, 2020 (including but not limited to visitors, residents and workers) to undergo a COVID-19 nucleic acid test by December 14. The Government has also arranged the testing agency (ONCO Medical Laboratory Limited) to set up a mobile specimen collection station at the badminton court of Richland Gardens. It will operate from 10am to 8pm daily until December 14 (tentatively).

The Government will decide whether it is necessary to extend the operation period of the mobile specimen collection station after reviewing the usage of the station and public's demand for the testing service. The testing agency will provide specimen collection services by combined nasal and throat swabs at the mobile specimen collection station. Apart from conducting polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test, the agency will also conduct rapid antigen test, free of charge.

To safeguard public health and safety, the Government appeals to the co-operation of all relevant residents of Richland Gardens to participate in the testing and stay home before the result of the PCR test is known, so as to prevent the risk of spreading the virus in the community.

The CHP spokesman urges all individuals who are in doubt about their own health condition, or individuals with exposure to infection risk, to undergo

testing promptly for early identification of infected persons.