

CHP investigates 10 additional cases of COVID-19

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) announced that as of 8pm yesterday (March 17), the CHP is investigating 10 additional confirmed cases of COVID-19, taking the number of cases to 168 in Hong Kong so far (comprising 167 confirmed cases and one probable case).

The 159th case involves a 69-year-old male with underlying illness who developed diarrhea and muscle pain since March 15. He attended the Accident and Emergency (A&E) Department at Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH) on March 16 and was admitted for treatment. His respiratory sample was tested positive for COVID-19 virus and he is now in stable condition. The patient and his wife travelled to London in the United Kingdom, Barcelona in Spain and Paris in France between March 3 and 12. They departed Paris on flight CX260 by Cathay Pacific on March 12 and arrived Hong Kong on March 13. The patient had been staying alone at his office in Harvest Moon House, 337-339 Nathan Road, Yau Ma Tei since returning to Hong Kong. His wife is asymptomatic and will be arranged for quarantine.

The 160th case involves an 18-year-old female who has good past health. She lives in Palm Drive, Redhill Peninsula in the Southern District and studies in Switzerland. She developed cough and sore throat since March 9. She consulted a private practitioner on March 16 and was referred to Pamela Youde Nethersole Eastern Hospital for treatment and admission. Her respiratory sample was tested positive for COVID-19 virus yesterday and she is now in stable condition. She took flight BA0733 (economy class cabin) by British Airways from Geneva in Switzerland to London in the United Kingdom on March 14 and took flight BA33 (economy class cabin) by British Airways from London to Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia arriving Kuala Lumpur on March 15. She then departed Kuala Lumpur on flight MH78 (economy class cabin) by Malaysia Airlines arriving Hong Kong on the same day. The patient's parents, younger brother, elder sister and domestic helper are asymptomatic and will be arranged for quarantine.

The 161st case involves a 37-year-old female flight attendant who has good past health and lives in Block 4, Tuen Mun Town Plaza. She developed fever and sore throat since March 12 and consulted a private practitioner on the same day. She was found to be symptomatic at a clinic on March 16 when obtaining her medical report and was subsequently transferred to the United Christian Hospital. Her respiratory sample was tested positive for COVID-19 virus and she is now in stable condition. Her boyfriend who lives with her is asymptomatic and will be arranged for quarantine. The patient worked at the flight CX315 (business class cabin) by Cathay Pacific from Hong Kong to Madrid in Spain on March 7 and the flight CX320 (business class cabin) by Cathay Pacific from Madrid on March 10 and arrived Hong Kong on March 11 respectively.

The 162nd case involves a 36-year-old male with underlying illness who lives in Tower 7, the Coronation, Yau Ma Tei. He developed fever and cough since March 12 and consulted a private practitioner on March 13. He attended the A&E Department at QEH on March 14. His deep throat saliva sample was tested positive for COVID-19 virus yesterday and was admitted to QEH for management. He is now in stable condition. The patient had no travel history during the incubation period. His wife who lives with him is symptomatic and was hospitalised. Investigations revealed that the patient had a meal gathering with friends on March 9. Among his friends, one man who had travelled to Switzerland between February 29 and March 8 had developed fever and cough on March 9. The man had been transferred to hospital for testing.

The 163rd case involves a 30-year-old woman who lives in Emerald Garden, 86 Pok Fu Lam Road. She has good past health but developed runny nose on March 11 and increased general malaise on March 15. She attended Queen Mary Hospital (QMH) on March 16 and was admitted for treatment. Her respiratory sample was tested positive for COVID-19 virus yesterday and she is now in a stable condition. The patient departed Hong Kong on February 27, and travelled to Paris and London. He arrived Hong Kong on March 6. Her husband who lives with her has developed symptoms and has been admitted to QMH, while her domestic helper who also lives together is asymptomatic and will be arranged for quarantine.

The 164th case involves a 21-year-old man who has good past health and studies in London. He developed cough on March 10 and was referred to Kwong Wah Hospital by the Port Health Division of the DH upon arrival at the Hong Kong International Airport on March 16. His respiratory sample was tested positive for COVID-19 virus on March 16. He was transferred to QEH and is now in stable condition. The patient travelled from London to Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia by flight BA0033 by British Airways (economy class cabin) on March 15, and then from Kuala Lumpur by flight CX5734 by Cathay Pacific (economy class cabin) arriving Hong Kong on March 16.ã€€

The 165th case involves a 24-year-old man who has good past health who worked earlier in Copenhagen, Denmark. He developed mild shortness of breath and diarrhea since March 5 and sore throat since March 16. The patient was referred to Princess Margaret Hospital (PMH) by the Port Health Division upon arrival at the Hong Kong International Airport on March 16. His respiratory sample was tested positive for COVID-19 virus yesterday and he is now in stable condition. The patient travelled from Copenhagen to Paris and Barcelona from February 29 to March 10. He returned to Copenhagen on March 10 and departed to Doha, Qatar by flight QR160 by Qatar Airways (economy class cabin) on March 15, and then from Doha by flight QR818 by Qatar Airways (economy class cabin) arriving Hong Kong on March 16.ã€€

The 166th case involves a 27-year-old man who has good past health and studies in London. He developed cough on March 10 and was referred to Caritas Medical Centre by the Port Health Division of the CHP upon arrival at the Hong Kong International Airport on March 16. His respiratory sample was tested positive for COVID-19 virus yesterday. He was transferred to PMH and is now in stable condition. The patient travelled from London by flight BA27

by Cathay Pacific (business class cabin) arriving Hong Kong on March 16.ã€€

The 167th case involves a 25-year-old male flight attendant, with good past health, who lives in Choi Wah House, Choi Fai Estate, Ngau Chi Wan. The patient is asymptomatic and attended the East Kowloon General Out-patient Clinic on March 16 as he was informed by his company that there were confirmed cases on a flight he had served. His deep throat saliva specimen was tested positive for COVID-19 virus yesterday. The patient will be admitted to United Christian Hospital for treatment and is now in stable condition. The patient worked at the flight CX812 (business class cabin) by Cathy Pacific from Hong Kong to Boston on March 5 and stayed at Boston for a few days. He then worked at the flight CX811 (business class cabin) by Cathy Pacific from Boston returning to Hong Kong on March 10, during which he served two passengers who later became confirmed patients (the 147th and 148th cases). His parents who live with him are asymptomatic and will be arranged for quarantine.

The 168th case involves a 43-year-old man with good past health, who lives alone in Tower 2, the Zenith, 258 Queen's Road East, Wan Chai. The patient developed cough since March 9, and blocked nose and headache since March 14. He attended the Violet Peel General Out-patient Clinic on March 16 and his deep throat saliva specimen was tested positive for COVID-19 virus yesterday. The patient was admitted to Prince of Wales Hospital for treatment yesterday and is now in stable condition. He visited Austria from March 4 to 11 and took the flight LX138 (business class cabin) from Zurich in Switzerland by Swiss International Airlines returning to Hong Kong on March 11. Investigations revealed that while in Austria he met a friend who was later a confirmed case of COVID-19 in Finland.

Passengers who travelled in the same cabin of the same flights with patients of the confirmed cases are urged to call the CHP hotline.

The CHP's epidemiological investigations and relevant contact tracing on the confirmed cases are ongoing. Quarantine will be arranged for close contacts while medical surveillance will be arranged for other contacts. For the progress on the contact tracing of the cases, please see the annex.

A spokesman for the CHP said, "In view of proliferation of the disease and continuous increase in the number of cases reported around the world, members of the public are strongly urged to avoid all non-essential travel outside Hong Kong.

"Meanwhile, according to our epidemiological investigations, clusters are observed in the local community involving large meal gatherings and other gatherings. Members of the public are urged to go out less and reduce social activities such as meal gatherings or other gatherings, and maintain an appropriate social distance with other people as far as possible."

The spokesman said, "The CHP strongly urges the public to maintain at all times strict personal and environmental hygiene, which is key to personal protection against infection and prevention of the spread of the disease in

the community. On a personal level, members of the public should wear a surgical mask when having respiratory symptoms, taking public transport or staying in crowded places. They should also perform hand hygiene frequently, especially before touching the mouth, nose or eyes.

"As for household environmental hygiene, members of the public are advised to maintain drainage pipes properly, and regularly pour water into drain outlets (U-traps); cover all floor drain outlets when they are not in use; after using the toilet, they should put the toilet lid down before flushing to avoid spreading germs."

The CHP will report the cases to the World Health Organization, National Health Commission, Health Commission of Guangdong Province, relevant health authorities and the Hospital Authority.

The CHP has set up a hotline (2125 1122) for public enquiries. The hotline operates from 8am to midnight daily. As at 4pm yesterday, a total of 36 803 calls were received.

Moreover, the Government has launched the website "COVID-19 Thematic Website" (www.coronavirus.gov.hk) for announcing the latest updates on various news on the COVID-19 infection and health advice to help the public understand the latest updates.

To prevent pneumonia and respiratory tract infection, members of the public should always maintain good personal and environmental hygiene. They are advised to:

- Wear a surgical mask when taking public transport or staying in crowded places. It is important to wear a mask properly, including hand hygiene before wearing and after removing a mask;
- Perform hand hygiene frequently, especially before touching the mouth, nose or eyes, after touching public installations such as handrails or door knobs, or when hands are contaminated by respiratory secretions after coughing or sneezing;
- Maintain drainage pipes properly and regularly (about once a week) pour about half a liter of water into each drain outlet (U-traps) to ensure environmental hygiene;
- Cover all floor drain outlets when they are not in use;
- After using the toilet, put the toilet lid down before flushing to avoid spreading germs;
- Wash hands with liquid soap and water, and rub for at least 20 seconds. Then rinse with water and dry with a disposable paper towel. If hand washing facilities are not available, or when hands are not visibly soiled, performing hand hygiene with 70 to 80 per cent alcohol-based handrub is an effective alternative;
- Cover your mouth and nose with tissue paper when sneezing or coughing. Dispose of soiled tissues into a lidded rubbish bin, then wash hands thoroughly; and
- When having respiratory symptoms, wear a surgical mask, refrain from work or attending class at school, avoid going to crowded places and seek medical

advice promptly.