

CHP investigates 24 confirmed and 73 asymptomatic additional SARS-CoV-2 virus cases with 220 cases pending status by nucleic acid tests as well as 311 cases that tested positive by rapid antigen tests

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (April 21) announced the latest epidemic situation of COVID-19. As of 0.00am, April 21, the CHP was investigating 317 additional cases that tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus by nucleic acid tests (24 confirmed cases, 73 asymptomatic cases and 220 cases with pending case status) in the past 24 hours. Separately, 311 additional positive cases through rapid antigen tests (RAT) (157 symptomatic cases and 154 asymptomatic cases) were reported. Hong Kong has recorded a total of 756 517 and 443 817 cases that tested positive by nucleic acid tests and RATs respectively for the SARS-CoV-2 virus so far.

The aforementioned newly reported cases consist of 25 imported cases (19 cases and six cases tested positive by nucleic acid tests and RAT respectively). The CHP is continuing with epidemiological investigations on the cases. Please refer to the "COVID-19 Thematic Website" (www.coronavirus.gov.hk) for more information.

In addition, as of 0.00am, April 21, a total of 8 999 death cases that have tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus during the fifth wave (since December 31, 2021) were recorded, with 8 937 and 59 deaths reported from the Hospital Authority and public mortuaries respectively as well as three deaths reported from the Chinese University of Hong Kong Medical Centre. Hong Kong has so far recorded a total of 9 212 death cases that have tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus.

Furthermore, among the earlier cases by nucleic acid tests reported, there were cases (including pending cases) changed to confirmed, asymptomatic or re-positive cases. As at yesterday (April 20), the total number of confirmed cases was 310 329, while the figures for asymptomatic cases, re-positive cases and pending/unknown cases recorded since January 1 were 187 113, 10 and 258 748 respectively.

As a passenger flight (KE607) operated by Korean Air arriving in Hong Kong from Seoul, Korea, on April 19 had one passenger who tested positive upon arrival as well as five passengers who failed to comply with the requirements specified under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Regulation of Cross-boundary Conveyances and Travellers) Regulation (Cap. 599H), and a passenger flight (CX100) operated by Cathay Pacific arriving in

Hong Kong from Sydney, Australia, on April 20 had four passengers who tested positive upon arrival, the DH thus invoked Cap. 599H to prohibit the landing of passenger flights in Hong Kong from Seoul operated by Korean Air and from Sydney operated by Cathay Pacific from April 22 to 28.

The spokesman for the CHP stressed that as the local situation of COVID-19 infection is still severe, the CHP strongly appeals to the community to continue to comply with social distancing measures, avoid going out and refrain from participating in unnecessary or crowded activities or gatherings (particularly religious or cross-family activities and gatherings). This would lower the risk of infection and prevent the virus from spreading in the community.

â€‹The spokesman reminded that COVID-19 vaccines are highly effective in preventing severe cases and deaths from the SARS-CoV-2 virus. They can provide effective protection to those vaccinated in preventing serious complications and even death after infection. People who have yet to receive vaccination, especially senior citizens, chronic patients and other immunocompromised persons who face a higher chance of death after COVID-19 infection, should get vaccinated as early as possible for self-protection and to reduce the risk of falling seriously ill and death should they get infected. Meanwhile, a person who gets COVID-19 and influenza at the same time may be more seriously ill and would have a higher risk of death. Influenza vaccination may reduce the likelihood of hospitalisation and the length of stay. In addition, seasonal influenza vaccination is recommended for all persons aged 6 months or above except those with known contraindications. Persons at higher risk of getting influenza and its complications, including the elderly and children, should receive seasonal influenza vaccination early. Please see details of the vaccination schemes on the CHP's website (www.chp.gov.hk/en/features/17980.html).