

CHP investigates 27 confirmed and 63 asymptomatic additional SARS-CoV-2 virus cases with 226 cases pending status by nucleic acid tests as well as 297 cases that tested positive by rapid antigen tests (with photo)

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (April 18) announced the latest epidemic situation of COVID-19. As of 0.00am, April 18, the CHP was investigating 316 additional cases that tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus by nucleic acid tests (27 confirmed cases, 63 asymptomatic cases and 226 cases with pending case status) in the past 24 hours. Separately, 297 additional positive cases through rapid antigen tests (RAT) (135 symptomatic cases and 162 asymptomatic cases) were reported. Hong Kong has recorded a total of 755 550 and 442 888 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 13 imported cases and all of them are cases tested positive by nucleic acid tests. 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 18, a total of 8 946 death cases that have tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus during the fifth wave (since December 31, 2021) were recorded, with 8 887 and 56 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 9 159 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 17), the total number of confirmed cases was 309 814, while the figures for asymptomatic cases, re-positive cases and pending/unknown cases recorded since January 1 were 186 346, 10 and 259 064 respectively.

As a passenger flight (TK083) operated by Turkish Airlines arriving in Hong Kong from Istanbul, Turkey, on April 17 had four passengers who tested positive upon arrival, and a passenger flight (MH072) operated by Malaysia Airlines arriving in Hong Kong from Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, on April 17 had one passenger who tested positive upon arrival as well as three 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), the DH thus invoked Cap. 599H to prohibit the landing of passenger flights in Hong Kong from Istanbul operated by Turkish Airlines and from Kuala Lumpur operated by Malaysia Airlines from April 19 to 25.

The spokesman for the CHP stressed that the local situation of COVID-19 infection is still severe, the CHP strongly appeals to the community to continue to comply with the 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).

