

CHP investigates 87 confirmed and 96 asymptomatic additional SARS-CoV-2 virus cases with 23 cases pending status by nucleic acid tests as well as 207 cases tested positive by rapid antigen tests (with photo)

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (April 28) announced the latest epidemic situation of COVID-19. As of 0.00am, April 28, the CHP was investigating 206 additional cases that tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus by nucleic acid tests (87 confirmed cases, 96 asymptomatic cases and 23 cases with pending case status) in the past 24 hours. Separately, 207 additional positive cases through rapid antigen tests (RATs) (102 symptomatic cases and 105 asymptomatic cases) were reported. Hong Kong has recorded a total of 758 155 and 445 326 cases that have tested positive by nucleic acid tests and RATs respectively for the SARS-CoV-2 virus so far.

The aforementioned newly reported cases consist of 24 imported cases (19 cases and five cases tested positive by nucleic acid tests and RATs 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.

Meanwhile, a whole genome sequencing analysis by the DH's Public Health Laboratory Services Branch confirmed that an imported case recorded earlier carried the newly emerged sub-lineage BA.5 under the Omicron mutant strain. The case involves a 40-year-old male who arrived from South Africa via Qatar on April 23 by flight QR818. He was asymptomatic and tested positive on arrival. He was transferred to a community isolation facility hotel. He had received two doses of COVID-19 vaccines (Comirnaty) in Hong Kong. An epidemiological investigation of the case is ongoing. Together with this case, Hong Kong has recorded a total of two cases involving the sub-lineage BA.5 and both are imported cases. No cases of that sub-lineage was found in the local community so far and the CHP will continue to closely monitor the latest developments.

In addition, as of 0.00am, April 28, a total of 9 074 death cases that had tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus during the fifth wave (since December 31, 2021) were recorded, with 9 005 and 66 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 9 287 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 27), the total number of confirmed cases was 330 401, while the figures for asymptomatic cases, re-positive cases and pending/unknown cases recorded since January 1 were 196 471, 10 and 231 067 respectively.

As the passenger flight (AC007) operated by Air Canada arriving in Hong Kong from Vancouver, Canada, on April 27, had three passengers who tested positive upon arrival, the DH thus invoked the Prevention and Control of Disease (Regulation of Cross-boundary Conveyances and Travellers) Regulation (Cap. 599H) to prohibit the landing of passenger flights in Hong Kong from Vancouver operated by Air Canada from April 29 to May 5.

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).

