

CHP investigates additional confirmed case of COVID-19 and follows up on cluster in Luk Chuen House

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) has announced that as of 4pm today (June 12), the CHP was investigating an additional confirmed case of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), taking the number of cases to 1,109 in Hong Kong so far (comprising 1,108 confirmed cases and one probable case).

The case involves a 58-year-old female (the 1,109th case) with good past health, who is the sister-in-law of the 34-year-old female patient of the 1,084th case and the elder sister of the 56-year-old male patient of the 1,085th case confirmed on May 31. They all lived in Luk Chuen House, Lek Yuen Estate, Sha Tin. Pending admission to a quarantine centre as a close contact, the patient developed fever on May 31 and was sent to Prince of Wales Hospital (PWH) for management on the same day. During her treatment at the hospital, the patient's nasopharyngeal swabs and throat swabs collected on May 31 and June 1 tested negative for severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). Her fever later subsided and she was discharged on June 2 and subsequently transferred to the quarantine centre. She had all along remained asymptomatic at the quarantine centre. The patient's deep throat saliva sample submitted before the end of quarantine yesterday (June 11) tested positive for SARS-CoV-2 and she was sent to PWH for management. She is in a stable condition.

The patient is a close home contact of the 1,084th case and the 1,085th case and lived alone in the quarantine centre since June 2. She had no other close contact before turning into a confirmed case. According to the CHP's initial epidemiological investigation, the patient is thought to have possibly acquired the infection from the 1,084th case and the 1,085th case through home contact. The case is classified as epidemiologically linked with local cases.

Meanwhile, the CHP has been proactively conducting epidemiological investigations and carrying out preventive control measures in regard to the cluster in Luk Chuen House, Lek Yuen Estate, Sha Tin. As of 4pm today, 1,397 deep throat saliva samples had been collected in Luk Chuen House, among which six samples need to be collected again owing to leakage, while 1,391 samples have had testing for COVID-19 completed. Except for the four confirmed cases announced on June 2 with positive results, other samples have tested negative.

The CHP is also following up with the residents in Luk Chuen House who have not yet returned their deep throat saliva samples. The CHP strongly appeals to those who have not got in touch with the CHP to contact the CHP personnel according to the medical test order issued and return their samples

to the CHP as soon as possible for testing.

Meanwhile, as of 4pm today, the CHP had collected and tested 2,120 samples for Luen Yuet House, Kwai Luen Estate, with no positive results.

The CHP again urged members of the public to maintain an appropriate social distance with other people as far as possible in their daily lives to minimise the risk of infection. In particular, they should go out less and avoid social activities such as meal gatherings or other gatherings to reduce the chance of contacting infected persons who may not present any symptoms, and minimise the risk of outbreak clusters emerging in the community.

A spokesman for the CHP said, "Given that the situation of COVID-19 infection remains severe and that there is a 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.

"The CHP also 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, regularly pour water into drain outlets (U-traps) and 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."

Moreover, the Government has launched the website "COVID-19 Thematic Website" (www.coronavirus.gov.hk) for announcing the latest updates on various news on COVID-19 infection and health advice to help the public understand the latest updates. Members of the public may also gain access to information via the COVID-19 WhatsApp Helpline launched by the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer. Simply by saving 9617 1823 in their phone contacts or clicking the link wa.me/85296171823?text=hi, they will be able to obtain information on COVID-19 as well as the "StayHomeSafe" mobile app and wristband via WhatsApp.

To prevent pneumonia and respiratory tract infections, 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 performing 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 doorknobs, 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 litre of water into each drain outlet (U-trap) 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.