

CHP investigates an imported case tested preliminarily positive for SARS-CoV-2 virus involving mutant strain at Tower 6, Albany Cove, Caribbean Coast Phase II in Tung Chung and Nam Tin Building, King's Road in North Point

â€‹The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (January 1) said that it is investigating an imported case tested preliminarily positive for SARS-CoV-2 virus involving mutant strain.

The case involves a 28-year-old female patient who is a local aircrew member living at Nam Tin Building, King's Road in North Point. She tested negative in Hong Kong on December 22 and left Hong Kong on December 24 for the United States (US) and returned to Hong Kong on December 27 by flight CX885 from the US. Her specimen collected upon arrival in the Temporary Specimen Collection Centre at Hong Kong International Airport tested negative.

The patient underwent medical surveillance and regular compulsory testing in accordance with the relevant requirements for exempted persons. Her sample collected at a Community Testing Centre on December 29 tested negative but she developed symptoms that evening. She consulted a private doctor on December 30. Her sample tested preliminarily positive today and carried the N501Y and T478K mutant strains. She had received two doses of COVID-19 vaccination (Comirnaty) in Hong Kong.

According to the patient, she had stayed in her friend's home at Tower 6, Albany Cove, Caribbean Coast Phase II in Tung Chung since December 29.

Due to the presence of mutant strain with higher transmissibility and risk of infection, the Government has adopted a prudent measure and has made a "restriction-testing declaration" tonight for the buildings where the patient resided in Hong Kong (Nam Tin Building, King's Road in North Point and Tower 6, Albany Cove, Caribbean Coast Phase II in Tung Chung). The places where she had visited in Hong Kong during the infectious period will also be included in a compulsory testing notice. Specified persons who were present at the relevant venues at specified periods need to undergo compulsory testing on the specified date. Epidemiological investigations and contact tracing of the case will continue.

The spokesman for the CHP said, "The Government has remained vigilant and has been closely monitoring the latest scientific data on mutant strains

as well as the epidemic situation of various places. The most stringent anti-epidemic measures will be implemented to prevent the mutant strain from spreading in the local community."

At the moment, the adverse impact on the epidemic situation caused by the newly emerged mutant strains is not fully known yet, but vaccination is still essential to prevent severe cases and deaths from COVID-19 infection. The Government has launched the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme. Members of the public are encouraged to get vaccinated. Details of the programme can be found at the designated website (www.covidvaccine.gov.hk).