

CHP investigates case of severe paediatric influenza A infection

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (January 14) investigating a case of severe paediatric influenza A infection.

The case involves an 8-year-old boy with good past health, who has presented with fever, vomiting, confusion and convulsion since January 12. He was admitted to Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH) on the same day and was subsequently transferred to QEH's paediatric intensive care unit for further management yesterday (January 13). He is now in a serious condition.

His respiratory specimen tested positive for influenza A virus upon laboratory testing. The clinical diagnosis was influenza A infection complicated with encephalopathy.

Initial enquiries revealed that the patient had not received seasonal influenza vaccination for the current season and had no travel history during the incubation period. His home contacts have remained asymptomatic so far.

The CHP's investigations are ongoing.

"Hong Kong has entered the 2018-19 winter influenza season. We anticipate that local seasonal influenza activity will continue to rise in the coming weeks and remain at an elevated level for some time. Members of the public should remain vigilant for protection against influenza," a spokesman for the CHP said.

"Particularly, children, people aged 50 to 64 years, the elderly and those with underlying illnesses who have not yet received influenza vaccination this season are urged to get vaccinated as early as possible to prevent seasonal influenza as it takes about two weeks for antibodies to develop in the body after vaccination. They should promptly seek medical advice if influenza-like symptoms develop so that appropriate treatment can be initiated as early as possible to prevent potential complications. Parents and carers are reminded to render assistance in prevention, care and control for vulnerable people," the spokesman added.

Besides receiving seasonal influenza vaccination as early as possible for personal protection, the public should maintain good personal and environmental hygiene for protection against influenza and other respiratory illnesses. For more information, please visit the CHP's [influenza page](#) and weekly [Flu Express](#).