

CHP investigates case of severe paediatric influenza A infection and outbreak of influenza A at residential child care centre in Causeway Bay

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) is today (February 1) investigating a case of severe paediatric influenza A infection and an outbreak of influenza A at a residential child care centre in Causeway Bay.

The severe paediatric case involves a 15-month-old boy with good past health, who has presented with fever and cough since January 30 and developed convulsion yesterday (January 31). He was taken to Union Hospital for medical attention yesterday and was referred and admitted to Prince of Wales Hospital for management on the same day.

His nasopharyngeal aspirate tested positive for influenza A virus upon laboratory testing. The clinical diagnosis was influenza A infection complicated with encephalopathy. He is now in a stable condition.

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 mother developed upper respiratory tract infection symptoms recently and has sought medical attention. She is in a stable condition and no hospitalisation is required. His other home contacts have remained asymptomatic so far.

The outbreak of influenza A at the residential child care centre in Causeway Bay affected 13 boys and nine girls, aged 5 months to 4, who have developed fever, cough and runny nose since January 11. All of them sought medical attention. Among them, 10 required hospitalisation and five of them were discharged following treatment. All patients have been in a stable condition. The respiratory specimens of three children tested positive for influenza A upon laboratory testing.

Officers of the CHP have conducted a site visit and advised the centre to adopt necessary infection control measures against respiratory tract infections. The centre has been placed under medical surveillance.

"While the percentage that tested positive for seasonal influenza viruses among the respiratory specimens received by the CHP's Public Health Laboratory Services Branch has slightly decreased in the past week, we expect that the local influenza activity may remain at an elevated level for some time. We urge the community to continue heightening its vigilance against seasonal influenza. As young children are particularly affected in this influenza season, we appeal to parents who have not yet arranged vaccination for their children in this season to do so as soon as possible to strengthen

their personal protection," a spokesman for the CHP said.

Apart from children, people aged 50 to 64 years, the elderly and those with underlying illnesses who have not yet received influenza vaccination this season are also 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. Medical advice should be sought promptly 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.

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](#).