

CHP investigates case of severe paediatric influenza A infection and outbreak of upper respiratory tract infection at kindergarten-cum-child care centre in Kowloon Tong

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (April 10) investigating a case of severe paediatric influenza A infection and an outbreak of upper respiratory tract infection (URI) at a kindergarten-cum-child care centre in Kowloon Tong.

The severe paediatric case involves a 27-day-old baby girl with good past health, who has presented with runny nose since April 7 and developed fever and cough yesterday (April 9). She was taken to the Accident and Emergency Department at Prince of Wales Hospital for medical attention yesterday and was admitted today for management. She was subsequently transferred to the Paediatric Intensive Care Unit of the hospital for further management.

Her nasopharyngeal aspirate tested positive for influenza A virus upon laboratory testing. The clinical diagnosis was influenza A infection complicated with severe pneumonia. She is now in a serious condition.

Initial enquiries revealed that the patient had no travel history during the incubation period. Her father developed cough and runny nose recently and has sought medical attention. He is in a stable condition and no hospitalisation is required. Her other home contacts have remained asymptomatic so far.

The URI outbreak at the kindergarten-cum-child care centre in Kowloon Tong affected nine boys and 11 girls aged 2 to 3, who have developed URI symptoms including runny nose, cough and sore throat since March 26. Thirteen of them sought medical attention and one has been discharged upon hospitalisation. All patients are in a stable condition.

The nasopharyngeal swab of the child admitted to hospital tested positive for human metapneumovirus (hMPV) upon laboratory testing.

"hMPV can cause acute respiratory tract infections in all ages. Persons with hMPV infection can present with symptoms of varying severity, such as fever, cough, difficulty in breathing or shortness of breath. Some children may also present with otitis media, diarrhoea, vomiting, rash and febrile convulsion. In adults, hMPV usually causes mild disease characterised by cough, hoarseness, runny nose and sputum production," a spokesman for the CHP explained.

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

"Although the winter influenza season has ended, members of the public aged 6 months or above who have not yet received seasonal influenza vaccination in the 2018-19 season can still receive it for personal protection against seasonal influenza," the spokesman said.

"Meanwhile, the public should continue to adopt strict personal, hand and environmental hygiene practices against respiratory illnesses and other infectious diseases," the spokesman added.

The public may visit the CHP's [influenza page](#) and weekly [Flu Express](#) for more information.