

CHP investigates eight additional confirmed cases of COVID-19

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) announced that as of 0.00am, December 19, the CHP was investigating eight additional confirmed cases of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), taking the number of cases to 12 527 in Hong Kong so far (comprising 12 526 confirmed cases and one probable case).

The newly reported cases are imported cases. Seven of the cases involved mutant strains while the mutation test result of the remaining case is pending. The patients comprise five males and three females, aged 20 to 62. Seven of them arrived in Hong Kong from Group A specified places (high-risk) and one from a then (day of arrival) Group B specified place (medium-risk). Three patients tested positive during the "test-and-hold" arrangement upon arrival at the Temporary Specimen Collection Centre (TSCC) at Hong Kong International Airport; four tested positive during quarantine at designated quarantine hotels; and one tested positive during quarantine at the designated quarantine facility (Rambler Garden Hotel, Tsing Yi).

A total of 66 cases have been reported in the past 14 days (December 5 to 18) and all of them are imported cases.

According to the testing and quarantine arrangements for local COVID-19 cases with mutant strains, the CHP reminded that persons who resided or worked within the same building as the residence of relevant cases will be subject to compulsory testing on specified dates in accordance with the announcement by the DH. They will also be required to undergo self-monitoring until the 21st day (see the details of the buildings and dates of testing at www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/CTN_Specified_premises_and_Dates_of_Testing.pdf).

Specified persons in relation to the following specified premises are also reminded to undergo compulsory testing in accordance with the compulsory testing notice tomorrow (December 20):

- Cheung Hing Building, 44-48 Pitt Street, Yau Ma Tei

The CHP's epidemiological investigations and relevant contact tracing on the confirmed cases are ongoing. For case details and contact tracing information, please see the Annex or the "COVID-19 Thematic Website" (www.coronavirus.gov.hk).

The spokesman for the CHP stressed, "The global situation of COVID-19 infection remains severe and there is a continuous increase in the number of cases involving mutant strains that carry higher transmissibility, and there are also reports of breakthrough infections in some vaccinated individuals. The CHP strongly urges members of the public to avoid all non-

essential travel outside Hong Kong, in particular to specified places with high risk under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Regulation of Cross-boundary Conveyances and Travellers) Regulation (Cap. 599H)."