

CHP investigates four additional cases of COVID-19

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) announced that as of 8pm today (February 25), the CHP is investigating four additional cases of COVID-19, taking the number of confirmed cases to 85 in Hong Kong so far.

The first confirmed case today involves a 33-year-old man (the 82nd case) who is the son of the 72nd case confirmed on February 23. The patient with good past health lives in Choi Tin House, Hing Tin Estate in Lam Tin. He developed fever on February 20 and consulted a private doctor on February 22 and then developed cough on February 24. He was transferred to United Christian Hospital (UCH) and admitted for treatment on February 24 following the CHP's epidemiological investigations. His respiratory sample was tested positive for COVID-19 virus and is now in a stable condition. He had no travel history during the incubation period. His mother who lives with him is asymptomatic and is currently under quarantine.

The second and third cases involves a 55-year-old mother (the 83rd case) and her 24-year-old son (the 84th case). Both have good past health and live in Hong Fook Court, Bedford Gardens in North Point. The female patient developed cough since February 17. She sought medical advice at Ruttonjee Hospital and was admitted for treatment on February 24. Her respiratory sample was tested positive for COVID-19 virus and is now in a stable condition. The patient had no travel history during the incubation period. She is the younger sister of the patient of the 76th case confirmed yesterday and had visited a Buddhist temple named Fook Wai Ching She in Maylun Apartments where she met with the patient of the 76th case in February.

Her son who lives with her is asymptomatic and did not visit Fook Wai Ching She. His respiratory sample was tested positive for COVID-19 virus and he is now in a stable condition. The patient had no travel history during the incubation period. Other family members living with the two patients, including the female patient's husband, daughter and mother-in-law are all asymptomatic and will be arranged for quarantine.

The CHP's epidemiological investigations revealed that the 83rd cases announced today together with the patients of the 65th, 70th, 73rd, 74th, 76th and 77th cases announced earlier (7 patients in total) had all visited Fook Wai Ching She in January or February. Those who also had visited the temple during the above period and developed relevant symptoms later, are urged to call the CHP hotline.

The CHP earlier collected a number of environmental samples from Fook Wai Ching She. Laboratory results revealed that two specimens were tested positive for COVID-19 virus. Investigation is ongoing.

The fourth case today involves a 60-year-old woman (the 85th case). The

patient with good past health lives at Block 4, Swiss Towers at 113 Tai Hang Road, Tai Hang. She developed cough on February 12 and consulted a private doctor for several times. She was admitted to Hong Kong Sanatorium & Hospital on February 24 and transferred to Queen Mary Hospital for isolation and treatment today. Her respiratory sample was tested positive for COVID-19 virus and she is now in a stable condition. She had no travel history during the incubation period. She lives with her husband, son and two helpers. Investigation is ongoing.

The CHP's epidemiological investigations and relevant contact tracing on the confirmed cases are ongoing. Quarantine will be arranged for close contacts while medical surveillance will be arranged for other contacts. For the progress on the contact tracing of the cases, please see annex.

A spokesman for the CHP said, "According to our preliminary epidemiological investigations, some of the confirmed cases are locally infected. The CHP strongly urged the public to maintain at all times strict personal and environmental hygiene which is key to personal protection against infection and prevention of the spread of the disease in the community."

The spokesman said, "On the personal level, members of the public should wear a surgical mask when having respiratory symptoms, taking public transport or staying in crowded places. They should also perform hand hygiene frequently, especially before touching the mouth, nose or eyes. The public should go out less and reduce social activities, and maintain appropriate social distance with other people as far as possible."

"As for household environmental hygiene, members of the public are advised to maintain drainage pipes properly and regularly pour water into drain outlets (U-traps); after using the toilet, they should put the toilet lid down before flushing to avoid spreading germs."

The CHP will report the cases to the World Health Organization, National Health Commission, Health Commission of Guangdong Province and Health Bureau of Macao.

The CHP has set up a hotline (2125 1122) for public enquiries. The hotline operates from 8am to midnight daily. As at 4pm today, a total of 20 808 calls were received.

Moreover, the Government has launched the website "COVID-19 Thematic Website" (www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/index.html) for announcing the latest updates on various news on COVID-19 infection and health advice to help the public grasp the latest updates.

To prevent pneumonia and respiratory tract infection, members of the public should always maintain good personal and environmental hygiene. They are advised to:

- Wear a surgical mask when taking public transport or staying in crowded

places. It is important to wear a mask properly, including hand hygiene before wearing and after removing a mask;

- Perform hand hygiene frequently, especially before touching the mouth, nose or eyes; after touching public installations such as handrails or door knobs; or when hands are contaminated by respiratory secretions after coughing or sneezing;

- Maintain drainage pipes properly and regularly (about once a week) pour about half a liter of water into each drain outlet (U-traps) to ensure environmental hygiene;

- After using the toilet, put the toilet lid down before flushing to avoid spreading germs;

- Wash hands with liquid soap and water, and rub for at least 20 seconds. Then rinse with water and dry with a disposable paper towel. If hand washing facilities are not available, or when hands are not visibly soiled, performing hand hygiene with 70 to 80 per cent alcohol-based handrub is an effective alternative;

- Cover your mouth and nose with tissue paper when sneezing or coughing. Dispose of soiled tissues into a lidded rubbish bin, then wash hands thoroughly; and

- When having respiratory symptoms, wear a surgical mask, refrain from work or attending class at school, avoid going to crowded places and seek medical advice promptly.