

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 (March 4), the CHP is investigating four additional confirmed cases of COVID-19, taking the number of cases to 105 in Hong Kong so far (comprising 104 confirmed cases and one probable case).

Two of the confirmed cases today are associated with the cluster related to a Buddhist temple named Fook Wai Ching She. One of the patients is a 43-year-old man (the 102nd case) with good past health. He is the person-in-charge of Fook Wai Ching She and lives there alone. He was asymptomatic all along and earlier sent to the quarantine centre as a close contact. His respiratory sample was tested positive for COVID-19 virus today. He is now under treatment at Pamela Youde Nethersole Eastern Hospital and is in a stable condition. The patient did not have recent travel history but had visited Emeishan City in Sichuan Province from January 17 to 20.

The other case involves a 57-year-old female (the 103rd case) who is the domestic helper of the patients of the 76th (who had visited Fook Wai Ching She) and 91st cases confirmed respectively on February 24 and 26. The patient has good past health and lives in Phase 1 of Redhill Peninsula in Tai Tam. She was asymptomatic and was earlier sent to the quarantine centre as a close contact. Her respiratory sample was tested positive for COVID-19 virus today. She is now under treatment at Queen Mary Hospital and is in a stable condition. The patient had no recent travel history and had not visit Fook Wai Ching She. Her close contacts (except the two confirmed patients), namely her employer and employer's son have earlier been arranged for quarantine.

The CHP's epidemiological investigations revealed that the 102nd and 103rd cases together with the patients of the 64th, 65th, 70th, 73rd, 74th, 76th, 77th, 83rd, 84th, 86th, 89th, 91st, 92nd, 93rd, 95th and 98th cases announced earlier (18 patients in total) had either visited Fook Wai Ching She in Maylun Apartments in North Point in January or February or had association with confirmed cases who had been to the temple. People who had visited the temple on January 25 onwards are again urged to call the CHP hotline and those who developed relevant symptoms will be arranged to hospitals for treatment.

The third case involves a 62-year-old female patient (the 104th case) who is the wife of the 63-year-old male patient (the 101st case) confirmed on March 2. The patient, with good past health, lives at 8 Tai Hang Road. She is asymptomatic and has earlier been sent to the quarantine centre as a close contact of case 85. Her respiratory specimen was tested positive for COVID-19 virus today. She is now under treatment at Pamela Youde Nethersole Eastern Hospital and is in a stable condition.

The patient had no recent travel history. She attended her daughter's

wedding banquet on February 22 where her husband (the 101st case) and sister-in-law (the 85th case) were also present.

â€‹ The fourth case is an imported case which involves a 69-year-old female patient (the 105th case) with underlying illness who lives in Landwood Court, Villa Lotto, Happy Valley. The patient had visited India from January 31 to February 24. She developed diarrhoea since February 23 while in India. After returning to Hong Kong, she developed fever since February 28 and consulted a Chinese medical practitioner twice. She attended the Violet Peel General Out-patient Clinic on March 3. Her deep throat saliva specimen was tested positive for COVID-19 virus today. She was arranged to be admitted to Ruttonjee Hospital by the CHP. She is now in a stable condition. Her husband and domestic helper who live with her are asymptomatic and will be arranged for quarantine.

â€‹ The patient took the flight CX694 by Cathay Pacific from New Delhi, India to Hong Kong and arrived on February 24. Passengers on board the returning flight concerned are urged to call the CHP hotline.

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, clusters are observed in local community involving large meal gatherings and other gatherings. Members of the public are urged to go out less and reduce social activities such as meals gatherings or other gatherings, and maintain appropriate social distance with other people as far as possible."

The spokesman said, "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. 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."

"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); cover all floor drain outlets when they are not in use; 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 the Hospital Authority.

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 27

159 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;
- Cover all floor drain outlets when they are not in use;
- 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.

The public should take heed of the health advice below when travelling outside Hong Kong:

- Do not travel to Hubei Province of Mainland where there is widespread community transmission of COVID-19 virus;
- Avoid unnecessary travel to Korea (especially Daegu and Gyeongsangbuk-do where the majority of the cases were reported); Emilia-Romagna, Lombardy and Veneto regions in Italy which cover Bologna, Milan, Venice and Verona, as well as Iran;
- When travelling to countries/areas with active community transmission of COVID-19 virus, the public should avoid close contact with persons with fever or respiratory symptoms. If it is unavoidable to come into contact with them, put on a surgical mask and continue to do so until 14 days after returning to Hong Kong;
- Avoid visiting hospitals. If it is necessary to visit a hospital, put on a

surgical mask and observe strict personal and hand hygiene;

- Avoid touching animals (including game), poultry/birds or their droppings;
- Avoid visiting wet markets, live poultry markets or farms;
- Avoid making close contact with patients, especially those with symptoms of acute respiratory infections;
- Do not consume game meat and do not patronise food premises where game meat is served;
- Adhere to food safety and hygiene rules such as avoiding consuming raw or undercooked animal products, including milk, eggs and meat, or foods which may be contaminated by animal secretions, excretions (such as urine) or contaminated products, unless they have been properly cooked, washed or peeled;
- If feeling unwell when outside Hong Kong, especially if experiencing a fever or cough, wear a surgical mask, inform the hotel staff or tour escort and seek medical advice at once; and
- After returning to Hong Kong, consult a doctor promptly if experiencing a fever or other symptoms, take the initiative to inform the doctor of any recent travel history and any exposure to animals, and wear a surgical mask to help prevent spread of the disease.