

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 on March 14, the CHP is investigating four additional confirmed cases of COVID-19, taking the number of cases to 142 in Hong Kong so far (comprising 141 confirmed cases and one probable case).

The first case involves a 39-year-old woman (the 139th case) who has good past health and lives alone in Cornell Centre in Chai Wan. She developed runny nose and blocked nose since March 12 and attended the Hong Kong Sanatorium and Hospital where she was transferred to Ruttonjee Hospital on March 13. Her respiratory sample was tested positive for COVID-19 virus on March 14 and she is now in a stable condition. The patient had travelled to Dubai, United Arab Emirates between February 26 and 29 and visited Madrid in Spain from February 29 to March 10. She took the flight EK142 (business class cabin) by The Emirates from Madrid to Dubai on March 10 and then departed Dubai on flight EK380 (business class cabin) by The Emirates arriving Hong Kong on March 11. Passengers who travelled in the same cabin on board the two flights are urged to call the CHP hotline.

The second case involves a 59-year-old man (the 140th case) who has underlying illness and lives in Heng Tai House, Fu Heng Estate, Tai Po, which is the same building where the patients (members of Egypt tour group) of the 119th and 124th cases (confirmed on March 10 and 11) live. He developed cough since March 10 and attended the Accident and Emergency Department at Alice Ho Miu Ling Nethersole Hospital on March 12 and 13. His deep throat saliva sample was tested positive for COVID-19 virus on March 14. He is now under treatment at Prince of Wales Hospital and is in a stable condition. The patient had no recent travel history during the incubation period. His wife and son who live with him are asymptomatic and will be arranged for quarantine.

The third case involves a 28-year-old woman (the 141st case) who has good past health and lives alone in 684 Clear Water Bay Road. She developed fever and cough since March 12 and attended the Accident and Emergency Department at Tseung Kwan O Hospital on the same day. Her deep throat saliva sample was tested positive for COVID-19 virus on March 14. She is now in a stable condition and has been arranged to United Christian Hospital for management. The patient resides in London in the United Kingdom. She returned to Hong Kong from London taking flight BA31 (business class cabin) by British Airways on March 11. Passengers who travelled in the same cabin on board the flight are urged to call the CHP hotline.

The fourth case involves a 59-year-old man (the 142nd case) who is the brother-in-law of the 54-year-old female patient of the 137th case confirmed on March 13. The patient with underlying illness lives in Tivoli Garden, Tsing King Road, Tsing Yi. He developed diarrhoea since March 2, shortness of breath and sore throat since March 10 and fever since March 12. He was

admitted to Princess Margaret Hospital for treatment during contact tracing by CHP on March 13. His respiratory sample was tested positive for COVID-19 virus on March 14 and he is now in stable condition. The patient had travelled to Morocco between February 27 and March 8. On March 8, he took the flight HV5760 (economy class cabin) by Transavia with the patient of the 137th case from Morocco to Amsterdam in the Netherlands and then departed Amsterdam on flight KL887 (premium economy class cabin) by KLM Royal Dutch Airlines arriving Hong Kong on March 9. Passengers who travelled in the same cabin on board the two flights are urged to call the CHP hotline. The patient's daughter-in-law, grandson and domestic helper who live with him are asymptomatic and have been arranged for quarantine.

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 the annex.

Meanwhile, the CHP is following up on the contact tracing of four confirmed cases outside Hong Kong and urged people who took the same flights as the patients to call the CHP hotline. The first case involves a 38-year old male patient confirmed in Guangdong who took the flight HX782 (economy class cabin) by Hong Kong Airlines from Manila in the Philippines to Hong Kong arriving on March 11. The second case involves a 33-year old male patient confirmed in Singapore who took the flight CX845 by Cathay Pacific from New York to Hong Kong arriving on March 10 and then took the flight CX759 by Cathay Pacific from Hong Kong to Singapore on the same day. The third case involves a 40-year old male patient confirmed in Australia who took the flight CX171 by Cathay Pacific from Hong Kong to Perth arriving on March 10.

For the fourth case, it involves an 85-year-old male patient who was a passenger on board the Diamond Princess cruise and became a confirmed patient in Japan. He was discharged after treatment in Japan and returned from Tokyo to Hong Kong on the flight NH811 by All Nippon Airways on March 10. The patient was admitted to Tuen Mun Hospital due to chest pain on March 12. His respiratory specimen collected during hospitalisation on March 13 was tested positive for COVID-19 on March 14.

A spokesman for the CHP said, "The CHP reminded members of the public that as the transmission of the COVID-19 virus has been increasing around the world, they are advised to consider avoiding all non-essential travel outside Hong Kong."

"Meanwhile, according to our epidemiological investigations, clusters are observed in the 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 meal gatherings or other gatherings, and maintain an appropriate social distance with other people as far as possible."

The spokesman said, "The CHP strongly urges 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 a 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 on March 14, a total of 34 136 calls were received.

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