

CHP investigates four additional confirmed cases of COVID-19

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) announced that as of 0.00am, October 12, the CHP was investigating four additional confirmed cases of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), taking the number of cases to 12 273 in Hong Kong so far (comprising 12 272 confirmed cases and one probable case).

The newly reported cases are imported cases. Three cases involved mutant strains while the mutation test result of the remaining case is pending. The patients included two males and two females, aged 32 to 58, who arrived Hong Kong from Group A specified places (high-risk). Three of them tested positive during the 'test-and-hold' arrangement upon arrival at the Temporary Specimen Collection Centre at Hong Kong International Airport while the remaining patient tested positive on the ninth day of quarantine.

Meanwhile, the CHP is investigating an overseas case of COVID-19 involving a 18-year-old male patient who lives at Block 7, King's Park Villa, Ho Man Tin. He tested negative in Hong Kong on September 29 and travelled to the United Kingdom (UK) on October 1 by flight BA032. His specimen collected in the UK on October 3 tested positive. He developed symptoms on October 11. He received two doses of COVID-19 vaccination (Comirnaty) on March 20 and April 10 in Hong Kong. He works at 31/F, Two Pacific Place, 88 Queensway, Admiralty, and last went to work on September 24.

The CHP is following up on the case with the UK health authority and the epidemiological investigations as well as contact tracing of the case are continuing. As a prudent measure, the places where the patient resided and worked in Hong Kong during the incubation period will be included in a compulsory testing notice. Specified persons who were present at the relevant venues at specified periods need to undergo compulsory testing on or before the specified dates.

A total of 72 cases have been reported in the past 14 days (September 28 to October 11) including a local case with unknown sources, while the rest are imported cases.

According to the testing and quarantine arrangements for local COVID-19 cases with mutant strains, the CHP reminded people that persons who resided or worked within the same building as the residence of relevant cases will be subject to compulsory testing on days 3, 7, 12 and 19 following the announcement of the relevant confirmed cases by the DH. They will also be required to undergo self-monitoring until the 21st day. Relevant deadlines of compulsory testing for respective specified premises are listed on the Government's website

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 (October 13):

- Block 1, Grand Garden, 61 South Bay Road, Repulse Bay

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 list of buildings with confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the past 14 days and the latest local situation of COVID-19 available on the website "COVID-19 Thematic Website" (www.coronavirus.gov.hk). The DH has also been closely monitoring the mutant strains of SARS CoV-2 and has uploaded the relevant information on Variants of Concern (VOCs) and Variants of Interest (VOIs), based on whole genome sequencing results, to the CHP's website (www.chp.gov.hk/en/statistics/data/10/641/100135/6973.html). The data will be updated regularly.

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)."

The spokesman reminded, "If travel is unavoidable, the CHP highly recommends the public to be fully vaccinated with COVID-19 vaccines before their departure. They should avoid participating in non-essential mass gatherings or events held outside Hong Kong. They should continue to wear a surgical mask and maintain strict personal and environmental hygiene at all times. Parents are also urged to avoid taking unvaccinated children travelling."

The Government has launched the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme. Members of the public are encouraged to get vaccinated. Details of the programme can be found at the designated website (www.covidvaccine.gov.hk). Generally speaking, COVID-19 vaccination can prevent COVID-19 infection, and if infected, reduce the risk of severe disease and death from COVID-19.

The CHP called on members of the public to pay attention to their health condition, seek medical advice early and undergo COVID-19 nucleic acid testing as soon as possible if respiratory symptoms develop. They should also maintain strict personal and environmental hygiene at all times to protect themselves against infection and prevent the spread of the disease in the community. For more related health advice, please refer to the website www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/health-advice.html .