

CHP investigates locally acquired SARS-CoV-2 virus cases with 1 254 cases tested positive by nucleic acid tests and 4 204 cases by RATs as well as 556 imported cases

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (November 14) announced the latest epidemic situation of COVID-19. As of 0.00am, November 14, the CHP was investigating 5 458 additional locally acquired cases that tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus, comprising 1 254 cases that tested positive by nucleic acid tests (656 confirmed cases, 486 asymptomatic cases and 112 cases with pending status) and 4 204 cases that tested positive by rapid antigen tests (RATs) in the past 24 hours.

Separately, 556 additional imported cases were reported, including 485 cases that tested positive by nucleic acid tests (94 confirmed cases, 357 asymptomatic cases and 34 cases with pending status) and 71 cases that tested positive by RATs. Among the additional imported cases, 317 of them involved samples at the airport, 142 of them involved samples during Day 1 to Day 3, and the remaining 97 involved samples during Day 4 to Day 7.

Hong Kong has recorded a total of 1 019 661 and 972 557 cases that have tested positive by nucleic acid tests and RATs respectively for the SARS-CoV-2 virus so far.

The CHP is continuing with epidemiological investigations of the cases. Please refer to the Annex and the "COVID-19 Thematic Website" (www.coronavirus.gov.hk) for more information.

The CHP has been closely monitoring the situation of positive cases involving mutant strains by genetic analysis. As of 0.00am, November 14, the DH's Public Health Laboratory Services Branch (PHLSB) had identified 217 cases of sub-lineage XBB, six of XBD, eight of BA.2.75.2, seven of BA.4.6, 11 of BF.7 and 32 of BQ.1.1 among imported cases in Hong Kong, while 24 cases of sub-lineage XBB, 15 of XBD, one of BA.2.75.2, one of BF.7 and 31 of BQ.1.1 have also been detected among local cases.

Among the specimens received by the DH's PHLSB during November 5 to 11 for verification testing of local cases, 0 per cent and about 87.6 per cent of them (seven-day moving average) are related to the sub-lineages BA.2.12.1 and BA.4/BA.5 (including suspected cases) of the Omicron mutant strain respectively.

In addition, as of 0.00am, November 14, a total of 10 323 death cases that had tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus during the fifth wave (since December 31, 2021) were recorded, with 10 234 and 85 deaths reported

from the Hospital Authority and public mortuaries respectively as well as four deaths reported from private hospitals. Hong Kong has so far recorded a total of 10 536 death cases that tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus.

Furthermore, among the earlier cases by nucleic acid tests reported, there were cases (including pending cases) changed to confirmed, asymptomatic or re-positive cases. As at yesterday (November 13), the total number of confirmed cases was 443 481, while the figures for asymptomatic cases, re-positive cases and pending/unknown cases recorded since January 1 were 329 277, 31 and 245 133 respectively.

The spokesman for the CHP said that COVID-19 vaccines are highly effective in preventing severe cases and deaths from the SARS-CoV-2 virus. They can provide effective protection to those vaccinated in preventing serious complications and even death after infection. People who have yet to receive vaccination, especially senior citizens, chronic patients, children and other immunocompromised persons who face a higher chance of death after COVID-19 infection, should get vaccinated as early as possible for self-protection and to reduce the risk of falling seriously ill and death should they get infected.

The CHP appeals to the community to keep on maintaining personal hygiene and comply with social distancing measures in order to jointly contain the risk of virus transmission. The spokesman reminded members of the public that they can call various hotlines to make enquiries on COVID-19 (www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/index.html#hotline).