

CHP investigates locally acquired SARS-CoV-2 virus cases with 1 311 cases tested positive by nucleic acid tests and 3 259 cases by RATs as well as 498 imported cases

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (November 9) announced the latest epidemic situation of COVID-19. As of 0.00am, November 9, the CHP was investigating 4 570 additional locally acquired cases that tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus, comprising 1 311 cases that tested positive by nucleic acid tests (690 confirmed cases, 526 asymptomatic cases and 95 cases with pending status) and 3 259 cases that tested positive by rapid antigen tests (RATs) in the past 24 hours.

Separately, 498 additional imported cases were reported, including 454 cases that tested positive by nucleic acid tests (72 confirmed cases, 359 asymptomatic cases and 23 cases with pending status) and 44 cases that tested positive by RATs. Among the additional imported cases, 310 of them involved samples at the airport, 116 of them involved samples during Day 1 to Day 3, and the remaining 72 involved samples during Day 4 to Day 7.

Hong Kong has recorded a total of 1 011 317 and 951 293 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 9, the DH's Public Health Laboratory Services Branch (PHLSB) had identified 212 cases of sub-lineage XBB, six of XBD, eight of BA.2.75.2, seven of BA.4.6, 11 of BF.7 and 30 of BQ.1.1 among imported cases in Hong Kong, while 14 cases of sub-lineage XBB, 12 of XBD, one of BA.2.75.2 and 23 of BQ.1.1 have also been detected among local cases.

Among the specimens received by the DH's PHLSB during October 31 to November 6 for verification testing of local cases, about 0.1 per cent and 89.8 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 9, a total of 10 279 death cases that had tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus during the fifth wave (since December 31, 2021) were recorded, with 10 191 and 84 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 10 492 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 8), the total number of confirmed cases was 439 676, while the figures for asymptomatic cases, re-positive cases and pending/unknown cases recorded since January 1 were 325 015, 31 and 244 830 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).