

CHP investigates locally acquired SARS-CoV-2 virus cases with 455 cases tested positive by nucleic acid tests and 1 495 cases by RATs as well as 37 imported cases

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (January 24) announced the latest epidemic situation of COVID-19. As of 0.00am, January 24, the CHP was investigating 1 950 additional locally acquired cases that tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus, comprising 455 cases that tested positive by nucleic acid tests (184 confirmed cases, 73 asymptomatic cases and 198 cases with pending status) and 1 495 cases that tested positive by rapid antigen tests (RATs) in the past 24 hours.

Separately, 37 additional imported cases were reported, including five cases that tested positive by nucleic acid tests (three confirmed cases and two asymptomatic cases) and 32 cases that tested positive by RATs.

Hong Kong has recorded a total of 1 213 386 and 1 648 926 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. The accumulative figures of cases identified by the DH's Public Health Laboratory Services Branch (PHLSB) as well as the proportion of sub-lineage and BA.4/BA.5 (including suspected cases) of the Omicron mutant strain among the specimens received by the DH's PHLSB for verification testing of local cases are listed in the Annex.

In addition, as of 0.00am, January 24, a total of 12 990 death cases that had tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus during the fifth wave (since December 31, 2021) were recorded, with 12 856 and 127 deaths reported from the Hospital Authority and public mortuaries respectively as well as seven deaths reported from private hospitals. Hong Kong has so far recorded a total of 13 203 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 (January 23), the total number of confirmed cases was 531 235, while the figures for asymptomatic cases, re-positive cases and pending/unknown cases recorded since January 1, 2022, were 418 566, 31 and 263 094 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 relevant mask requirements 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).