

CHP investigates locally acquired SARS-CoV-2 virus cases with 858 cases tested positive by nucleic acid tests and 2 328 cases by RATs as well as 343 imported cases

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (October 3) announced the latest epidemic situation of COVID-19. As of 0.00am, October 3, the CHP was investigating 3 186 additional locally acquired cases that tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus, comprising 858 cases that tested positive by nucleic acid tests (398 confirmed cases, 392 asymptomatic cases and 68 cases with pending status) and 2 328 cases that tested positive by rapid antigen tests (RATs) in the past 24 hours.

Separately, 343 additional imported cases were reported, including 313 cases that tested positive by nucleic acid tests (43 confirmed cases, 239 asymptomatic cases and 31 cases with pending status) and 30 cases that tested positive by RATs.

Hong Kong has recorded a total of 953 883 and 822 526 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 "COVID-19 Thematic Website" (www.coronavirus.gov.hk) for more information.

Among the specimens received by the DH's Public Health Laboratory Services Branch during September 24 to 30 for verification testing of local cases, about 3.2 per cent and 89.7 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, October 3, a total of 9 963 death cases that had tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus during the fifth wave (since December 31, 2021) were recorded, with 9 878 and 82 deaths reported from the Hospital Authority and public mortuaries respectively as well as three deaths reported from the Chinese University of Hong Kong Medical Centre. Hong Kong has so far recorded a total of 10 176 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 (October 2), the total number of confirmed cases was 415 612, while the figures for asymptomatic cases, re-positive cases and pending/unknown cases recorded since January 1 were 294

814, 31 and 242 255 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).