

CHP investigates one additional confirmed case of COVID-19 and provides update on genome analysis of three imported cases involving local air crew and test result of environmental samples taken at Four Points by Sheraton Hong Kong Tung Chung

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) announced that as of 0.00am, November 16, the CHP was investigating one additional confirmed case of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), taking the number of cases to 12 389 in Hong Kong so far (comprising 12 388 confirmed cases and one probable case).

The newly reported case is an imported case which involved a mutant strain. The 21-year-old female patient arrived in Hong Kong from a Group A specified place (high-risk) and tested positive during the "test-and-hold" arrangement upon arrival at the Temporary Specimen Collection Centre at Hong Kong International Airport.

Separately, the CHP is continuing to follow up on the three imported cases involving local cargo crew who carry the L452R mutant strain (cases 12376, 12378 and 12387). The latest whole genome sequencing analysis by the CHP further revealed that the genetic sequence of case 12387 is almost identical to that of cases 12376 and 12378. It showed that the three cases are very likely to have acquired the infection during their stay in the hotel in Germany. Follow-up actions on the cases concerned are ongoing.

Meanwhile, regarding the cluster of two cases with the Delta strain sub-lineage AY.4.2 (cases 12374 and 12382) with identical genetic sequences on the 15th floor of the North Wing of Four Points by Sheraton Hong Kong Tung Chung, the CHP collected 73 environmental samples on November 12 from the rooms concerned and common areas on the same floor. Among the 73 samples, 13 samples tested positive for SARS-CoV-2, including five samples taken inside Room 1515 (case 12374) and eight samples inside Room 1517 (case 12382). Another eight samples tested indeterminate (including three from Room 1515 and five from Room 1517). The remaining 52 samples tested negative. Disinfection in the hotel has been completed. The CHP has transferred a total of 44 guests who had stayed from November 1 to 6 on the floor concerned of the North Wing in the hotel to the Penny's Bay Quarantine Centre to undergo compulsory quarantine.

A total of 40 cases have been reported in the past 14 days (November 2 to 15) and all of them are imported cases.

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 "COVID-19 Thematic Website" (www.coronavirus.gov.hk).

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)."