

CHP investigates six additional cases of COVID-19

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) announced that as of 8pm today (March 13), the CHP is investigating six additional confirmed cases of COVID-19, taking the number of cases to 138 in Hong Kong so far (comprising 137 confirmed cases and one probable case).

Two of the confirmed cases today are associated with the 130th and 131st cases confirmed on March 11 and yesterday (March 12) respectively. The cases involve a 16-month-old boy (the 133rd case) and a 66-year-old male patient (the 138th case). The baby boy is the son of the patients of the 130th and 131st cases while the male patient is the father of the 130th case. Both patients have good past health. The baby boy arrived in Hong Kong with his parents from England on February 29. He stayed at his maternal grandparents' flat at iPlace on Castle Peak Road in Kwai Chung. He developed runny nose yesterday and was admitted to Princess Margaret Hospital (PMH) for treatment during contact tracing by CHP. His respiratory sample was tested positive for COVID-19 virus today. The 66-year-old male patient had no recent travel history and is asymptomatic. His deep throat saliva specimen was tested positive for COVID-19 virus today and has been arranged for management at PMH. Both patients are in stable condition. The male patient's wife is asymptomatic and is arranged quarantine.

The third case involves a 67-year-old man (the 134th case) who has good past health and lives at Ng Tong Tsai, Lam Tsuen, Tai Po. He developed fever and cough since March 10 and attended the Accident and Emergency Department at Ruttonjee Hospital on March 11. His deep throat saliva specimen was tested positive for COVID-19 virus today. He is now under treatment at Prince of Wales Hospital and is in a stable condition. The patient had travel history during the incubation period and had been to London between February 27 and March 8. His wife who lives with him has developed sore throat and was admitted to Alice Ho Miu Ling Nethersole Hospital for treatment. The patient departed London on flight CX250 (First class cabin) by Cathay Pacific arriving Hong Kong on March 8. Passengers who travelled in the same cabin on board the flight are urged to call the CHP hotline.

The fourth case involves a 30-year-old woman (the 135th case) with good past health, who lives alone in View Villa, Tai Ping Shan Street, Sheung Wan. She developed fever since March 8 and attended the Accident and Emergency Department at Ruttonjee Hospital on the same day. Her deep throat saliva sample was tested positive for COVID-19 virus today and has been arranged for management at Queen Mary Hospital. She is now in stable condition. The patient had recent travel history and had been to Greece between February 10 and 26. She then travelled from Athens, Greece to London, the United Kingdom on February 26 and then from London to Paris, France on February 27. She stayed in Paris until March 4 when she took the flight from Paris to Istanbul in Turkey for transit and then returned Hong Kong on March 5.

The fifth case involves a 61-year-old man (the 136th case) with good past health who lives alone in 18 Stanley Main Street, Southern. He developed cough and sore throat since March 7. He sent his sputum specimen for testing on COVID-19 virus through his family physician yesterday. His sputum specimen was tested positive for COVID-19 virus today and was admitted for management at Pamela Youde Nethersole Eastern Hospital (PYNEH). He is now in stable condition. The patient had travel history during the incubation period. He had been to Colorado in the United States of America between February 27 and March 9. He returned to Hong Kong from Colorado via Tokyo in Japan by flight NH811 by All Nippon Airways on March 10.

The sixth case involves a 54-year-old woman (the 137th case) with good past health, who lives alone in Tai Hang Terrace, Chun Fai Road, Tai Hang. She developed cough since March 6 and attended the Sai Ying Pun Jockey Club General Out-patient Clinic on March 12. Her deep throat saliva sample was tested positive for COVID-19 virus today and was admitted for management at PYNEH. She is now in stable condition. The patient had travelled to France and Morocco between February 13 and March 8. On March 8, she took the flight HV5760 (economy class cabin) by Transavia from Morocco to Amsterdam in Holland and then departed Amsterdam on flight KL887 (premium economy class cabin) by KLM Royal Dutch Airlines arriving Hong Kong on March 9. Passengers who travelled in the same cabin on board the two flights are urged to call the CHP hotline.

The CHP's epidemiological investigations and relevant contact tracing on the confirmed cases are ongoing. Quarantine will be arranged for close contacts while medical surveillance will be arranged for other contacts. For the progress on the contact tracing of the cases, please see the annex.

A spokesman for the CHP said, "The CHP reminded members of the public that as the transmission of the COVID-19 virus has been increasing around the world, they are advised to consider delaying all non-essential travel outside Hong Kong."

"Meanwhile, according to our epidemiological investigations, clusters are observed in the local community involving large meal gatherings and other gatherings. Members of the public are urged to go out less and reduce social activities such as meal gatherings or other gatherings, and maintain an appropriate social distance with other people as far as possible."

The spokesman said, "The CHP strongly urges the public to maintain at all times strict personal and environmental hygiene, which is key to personal protection against infection and prevention of the spread of the disease in the community. On a personal level, members of the public should wear a surgical mask when having respiratory symptoms, taking public transport or staying in crowded places. They should also perform hand hygiene frequently, especially before touching the mouth, nose or eyes.

"As for household environmental hygiene, members of the public are advised to maintain drainage pipes properly, and regularly pour water into

drain outlets (U-traps); cover all floor drain outlets when they are not in use; after using the toilet, they should put the toilet lid down before flushing to avoid spreading germs."

The CHP will report the cases to the World Health Organization, National Health Commission, Health Commission of Guangdong Province and the Hospital Authority.

The CHP has set up a hotline (2125 1122) for public enquiries. The hotline operates from 8am to midnight daily. As at 4pm today, a total of 33 379 calls were received.

Moreover, the Government has launched the website "COVID-19 Thematic Website" (www.coronavirus.gov.hk) for announcing the latest updates on various news on the COVID-19 infection and health advice to help the public understand the latest updates.

To prevent pneumonia and respiratory tract infection, members of the public should always maintain good personal and environmental hygiene. They are advised to:

- Wear a surgical mask when taking public transport or staying in crowded places. It is important to wear a mask properly, including hand hygiene before wearing and after removing a mask;
- Perform hand hygiene frequently, especially before touching the mouth, nose or eyes, after touching public installations such as handrails or door knobs, or when hands are contaminated by respiratory secretions after coughing or sneezing;
- Maintain drainage pipes properly and regularly (about once a week) pour about half a liter of water into each drain outlet (U-traps) to ensure environmental hygiene;
- Cover all floor drain outlets when they are not in use;
- After using the toilet, put the toilet lid down before flushing to avoid spreading germs;
- Wash hands with liquid soap and water, and rub for at least 20 seconds. Then rinse with water and dry with a disposable paper towel. If hand washing facilities are not available, or when hands are not visibly soiled, performing hand hygiene with 70 to 80 per cent alcohol-based handrub is an effective alternative;
- Cover your mouth and nose with tissue paper when sneezing or coughing. Dispose of soiled tissues into a lidded rubbish bin, then wash hands thoroughly; and
- When having respiratory symptoms, wear a surgical mask, refrain from work or attending class at school, avoid going to crowded places and seek medical advice promptly.