

CHP investigates six additional confirmed cases of COVID-19

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health has announced that as of 0.00am, November 2, the CHP was investigating six additional confirmed cases of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), taking the number of cases to 5 337 in Hong Kong so far (comprising 5 336 confirmed cases and one probable case).

Among the newly reported cases announced, three had a travel history during the incubation period, one was a local case with unknown sources while the other two were epidemiologically linked with a local case.

The case with unknown sources involves a 26-year-old woman (case 5 332) who had developed fever on October 28. The patient consulted a private doctor on the same day and was referred to the Accident and Emergency Department (A&ED) of Alice Ho Miu Ling Nethersole Hospital (AHNH). She submitted a deep throat saliva sample on October 31. She works at 1 Heung Yip Road, Wong Chuk Hang and last went to work on October 28. She had been to Seaview Holiday Resort in Mui Wo with seven friends between October 25 and 27.

The two cases which were epidemiologically linked with case 5 332 involve a 26-year-old man (case 5 336) and a 15-year-old boy (case 5 337). Case 5 336 had stayed with case 5 332 in Seaview Holiday Resort between October 25 and 27 who developed cough and runny nose on October 30. He was identified as a symptomatic close contact by the CHP during contact tracing and was arranged to A&ED of AHNH on October 31. Case 5 337 is a relative of case 5 332 who had contact with her on October 27 and developed cough on October 31 and sought medical attention at A&ED of AHNH on November 1.

The CHP's epidemiological investigations and relevant contact tracing on the confirmed cases are ongoing. The CHP will distribute specimen collection bottles to the residences of the patients and places where the patients had visited during their communicable periods. Bottles will also be distributed to staff and residents of the Seaview Holiday Resort, the company where case 5 332 works in and the school where case 5 337 studies at.

For case details and contact tracing information, please see the Annex or the list of buildings with confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the past 14 days and the latest local situation of COVID-19 available on the website "COVID-19 Thematic Website" (www.coronavirus.gov.hk).

A spokesman for the CHP said, "During the CHP's epidemiological investigations and relevant contact tracing on the confirmed cases, we will compile and upload (www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/building_list_eng.pdf) a list of buildings that confirmed patients had visited from two days before the onset of symptoms. Given that cases of local infection continue to occur from time to time, members of the public are urged to seek medical attention

immediately if they believe that they had visited the same place at an identical time with a confirmed patient and feel unwell subsequently. If they remain asymptomatic but are concerned that they have been infected, they can also visit the Hospital Authority's designated general out-patient clinics (www.ha.org.hk/haho/ho/covid-19/GOPC_extend_EN.pdf) to obtain specimen collection packs and collect deep throat saliva specimens for free COVID-19 testing."

In view of the severe epidemic situation, the CHP called on members of the public to avoid going out, having social contact and dining out. They should put on a surgical mask and maintain stringent hand hygiene when they need to go out. The CHP strongly urged the elderly to stay home as far as possible and avoid going out. They should consider asking their family and friends to help with everyday tasks such as shopping for basic necessities.

The spokesman said, "Given that the situation of COVID-19 infection remains severe and that there is a continuous increase in the number of cases reported around the world, members of the public are strongly urged to avoid all non-essential travel outside Hong Kong.

"The CHP also 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, regularly pour water into drain outlets (U-traps) and 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."

Moreover, the Government has launched the website "COVID-19 Thematic Website" (www.coronavirus.gov.hk) for announcing the latest updates on various news on COVID-19 infection and health advice to help the public understand the latest updates. Members of the public may also gain access to information via the COVID-19 WhatsApp Helpline launched by the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer. Simply by saving 9617 1823 in their phone contacts or clicking the link wa.me/85296171823?text=hi, they will be able to obtain information on COVID-19 as well as the "StayHomeSafe" mobile app and wristband via WhatsApp.

To prevent pneumonia and respiratory tract infections, 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 performing 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 doorknobs, 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 litre of water into each drain outlet (U-trap) 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.