

CHP investigates three additional cases and one probable case of COVID-19

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) announced that as of 8pm today (February 20), the CHP is investigating three additional cases and one probable case of COVID-19, taking the number of confirmed cases to 68 and number of probable case to 1 in Hong Kong so far.

The probable case involves a 75-year-old man (the 66th case) who is the husband of the 83-year-old female patient of the 63rd case confirmed yesterday. The patient with good past health lives in Block 1, Seaview Garden in Tuen Mun. He developed cough and shortness of breath on January 25. He sought treatment from two private doctors between January 31 and February 7. He was transferred to Tuen Mun Hospital for isolation and treatment on February 18 following the CHP's epidemiological investigations. His respiratory specimen was tested negative for COVID-19 virus at that moment. Nevertheless, following a CT-scan that showed relevant findings and information from preliminary epidemiological investigations, the case was classified as a probable case. The patient is in a stable condition.

The patient made several day trips to Zhangmutou in Dongguan, Guangdong during the incubation period (January 12 to 25). Meanwhile, further investigations revealed that he visited 1/F of Hoi Tin Garden Restaurant located at 5 Sam Shing Street, Tuen Mun for breakfast from 9am to 11am daily from January 25 to February 18 except on February 15. Those who also had visited the restaurant during the above period and develop relevant symptoms later are urged to call the CHP hotline.

The first confirmed case today involves a 38-year-old woman (the 67th case) with good past health who lives in Hiu Fai House, Hiu Lai Court in Kwun Tong. She developed cough and fever on February 10 and consulted a private doctor on the same day. She consulted the same private doctor on February 14 and sought medical attention at United Christian Hospital (UCH) on February 19 where she was admitted for treatment. Her respiratory sample was tested positive for COVID-19 virus and is now in a stable condition. She had no travel history during the incubation period. She lives with her husband and son. Her husband is asymptomatic and will be arranged for quarantine while her son presented with on and off cough since January 24 and will be sent to the UCH for further examination.

The second confirmed case involves a 58-year-old man (the 68th case) with good past health who lives in Shek Wu Wai, San Tin, Yuen Long. He developed fever and cough since February 8. He consulted a private doctor on February 10 and 17. He then sought medical attention at North District Hospital on February 18 and was admitted to the hospital for treatment yesterday due to syncope. His respiratory sample was tested positive for

COVID-19 virus and he is now in a stable condition. The patient had no travel history during the incubation period. His wife and son who live with him are asymptomatic and will be arranged for quarantine.

The patient is a driver of urban taxi with vehicle registration number JW9897. His last date of work was February 16. Those who took the taxi between January 25 and February 16 are urged to call the CHP hotline.

The third case was detected via the "Enhanced Laboratory Surveillance Programme" which was expanded from February 19 to cover the patients attending the General Out-patient Clinics as well as Accident and Emergency Departments. The patient is a 48-year-old man (the 69th case). The patient, with underlying illness, lives in Yun Mei House, Yau Mei Court, Yau Tong. He developed fever and cough on February 18 and sought treatment at Kwun Tong Community Health Centre on February 19. His deep throat saliva specimen was tested positive for COVID-19 virus. The patient was transferred to UCH for isolation and treatment today. He is now in a stable condition.

The patient is a police officer and has not been to work since he developed symptoms on February 18. He had no travel history during the incubation period. His home contacts, namely his wife and mother-in-law, both developed symptoms and will be transferred to UCH for treatment.

The taxi driver who drove the patient from his home to Kwun Tong Community Health Centre at around 10am to 10.30am on February 19 is urged to call the CHP hotline. The patient also attended a gathering at Star Seafood and Roasted Goose Restaurant on 271-285 Des Voeux Road West, Sai Ying Pun, Western District from around 5.30pm to 10pm on February 18. Relevant contact tracing is ongoing.

Meanwhile, regarding the 25th case and 62nd case, investigations revealed that the patients both returned to Hong Kong through Hong Kong Zhuhai Macao Bridge Control Point on February 5. People who took the Hong Kong Zhuhai Macao bus from Macao to Hong Kong on February 5 from around 5 pm to 7 pm 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 annex.

A spokesman for the CHP said, "According to our preliminary epidemiological investigations, some of the confirmed cases are locally infected. The CHP strongly urged 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."

The spokesman said, "On the 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. The public should go out less and reduce social activities, and maintain appropriate social distance with other people as far as possible."

"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); 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 17 436 calls were received.

A dedicated webpage (www.gov.hk/ncv) has been set up by the CHP. Information including the latest local situation, list of buildings and list of flights/trains/ships relevant to the confirmed cases, countries/areas with reported cases as well as health advice and a local situation interactive map dashboard are available on the webpage to help the public grasp 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;
- 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.

The public should take heed of the health advice below when travelling outside Hong Kong:

- Do not travel to Hubei Province where community transmission of COVID-19 is occurring;
- Avoid close contact with persons with fever or respiratory symptoms in countries/areas with possible community transmission of COVID-19. If it is unavoidable to come into contact with them, put on a surgical mask and continue to do so until 14 days after returning to Hong Kong;
- Avoid visiting hospitals. If it is necessary to visit a hospital, put on a surgical mask and observe strict personal and hand hygiene;
- Avoid touching animals (including game), poultry/birds or their droppings;
- Avoid visiting wet markets, live poultry markets or farms;
- Avoid making close contact with patients, especially those with symptoms of acute respiratory infections;
- Do not consume game meat and do not patronise food premises where game meat is served;
- Adhere to food safety and hygiene rules such as avoiding consuming raw or undercooked animal products, including milk, eggs and meat, or foods which may be contaminated by animal secretions, excretions (such as urine) or contaminated products, unless they have been properly cooked, washed or peeled;
- If feeling unwell when outside Hong Kong, especially if experiencing a fever or cough, wear a surgical mask, inform the hotel staff or tour escort and seek medical advice at once; and
- After returning to Hong Kong, consult a doctor promptly if experiencing a fever or other symptoms, take the initiative to inform the doctor of any recent travel history and any exposure to animals, and wear a surgical mask to help prevent spread of the disease.