

CHP investigates three additional confirmed cases of COVID-19

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) announced that as of 0.00am, November 3, the CHP was investigating three additional confirmed cases of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), taking the number of cases to 12 353 in Hong Kong so far (comprising 12 352 confirmed cases and one probable case).

The newly reported cases are imported cases and all involved mutant strains. The patients comprise two males and one female, aged 26 to 62. All of them arrived in Hong Kong from Group A specified places (high-risk) and tested positive under the "test-and-hold" arrangement upon arrival at the Temporary Specimen Collection Centre (TSCC) at Hong Kong International Airport.

Among the above-mentioned cases, case 12357 involves a 62-year-old male patient, who lives at Block 21, Baguio Villa, Pok Fu Lam. He travelled to the United Kingdom on October 16 and returned to Hong Kong on November 1 by flight BA027. His specimen collected upon arrival in the TSCC tested positive for COVID-19 and carries the L452R mutant strain but does not carry the N501Y or E484K mutant genes. He developed symptoms on the same day. He works at Hong Kong Football Club on 3 Sports Road, Happy Valley, and last went to work on October 14. As a prudent measure, the places where he resided, worked and visited during the incubation period were included in a compulsory testing notice. Specified persons who were present at the relevant venues at specified periods need to undergo compulsory testing on the specified date.

A total of 48 cases have been reported in the past 14 days (October 20 to November 2) 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 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). The DH has also been closely monitoring the mutant strains of SARS CoV-2 and has uploaded the relevant information on Variants of Concern (VOCs) and Variants of Interest (VOIs), based on whole genome sequencing results, to the CHP's website (www.chp.gov.hk/en/statistics/data/10/641/100135/6973.html). The data will be updated regularly.

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)."

The spokesman reminded, "If travel is unavoidable, the CHP highly recommends the public to be fully vaccinated with COVID-19 vaccines before their departure. They should avoid participating in non-essential mass gatherings or events held outside Hong Kong. They should continue to wear a surgical mask and maintain strict personal and environmental hygiene at all times. Parents are also urged to avoid taking unvaccinated children travelling."

The Government has launched the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme. Members of the public are encouraged to get vaccinated. Details of the programme can be found at the designated website (www.covidvaccine.gov.hk). Generally speaking, COVID-19 vaccination can prevent COVID-19 infection, and if infected, reduce the risk of severe disease and death from COVID-19.

â€‹The CHP called on members of the public to pay attention to their health condition, seek medical advice early and undergo COVID-19 nucleic acid testing as soon as possible if respiratory symptoms develop. They should also maintain strict personal and environmental hygiene at all times to protect themselves against infection and prevent the spread of the disease in the community. For more related health advice, please refer to the website www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/health-advice.html.