

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

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) announced that as of 0.00am, December 1, the CHP was investigating three additional confirmed cases of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), taking the number of cases to 12 440 in Hong Kong so far (comprising 12 439 confirmed cases and one probable case).

The newly reported cases are imported cases. One of the cases involved a mutant strain while the mutation test results of the remaining two cases are pending. The patients comprise three females, aged 5 to 61. All of them arrived in Hong Kong from Group A specified places (high-risk). Case 12443 is a close contact of imported cases confirmed previously (cases 12411, 12412, 12413, 12437, 12438 and 12439) and she tested positive at the Penny's Bay Quarantine Centre. For the remaining patients, one of them tested positive during the "test-and-hold" arrangement upon arrival at the Temporary Specimen Collection Centre at Hong Kong International Airport and the other one tested positive during quarantine.

A total of 48 cases have been reported in the past 14 days (November 17 to 30) and all of them are imported cases.

Also, the CHP provided an update on the latest investigations on imported case 12433 involving a 38-year-old male patient who arrived in Hong Kong from Qatar on flight QR818 on November 24 for transit. He remained in the airside of the restricted area due to a visa-related issue and tested positive in a pre-departure test on November 27 at the restricted area in Hong Kong International Airport. The patient had not received COVID-19 vaccination and had been asymptomatic. He tested positive on November 27 for antibody after admission and the CT values for the three tests after admission are 30-36. The whole genome sequencing conducted by the DH's Public Health Laboratory Services Branch confirmed that the case carried the Variant of Concern Omicron. Further epidemiological investigations revealed that the patient travelled from Papua New Guinea to Nigeria on November 15 and subsequently travelled from Qatar to Hong Kong. The places where he had been at Hong Kong International Airport had been included in a compulsory testing notice on November 29. Specified persons who had been present at the relevant venues at specified periods need to undergo compulsory testing by December 1. No relevant confirmed case has been recorded at the moment. There are so far four cases involving Omicron in Hong Kong. Two cases are related to South Africa and two cases are related to Nigeria.

According to the testing and quarantine arrangements for local COVID-19 cases with mutant strains, the CHP reminded that persons who resided or worked within the same building as the residence of relevant cases will be subject to compulsory testing on specified dates in accordance with the

announcement by the DH. They will also be required to undergo self-monitoring until the 21st day (see the details of the buildings and dates of testing at www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/CTN_Specified_premises_and_Dates_of_Testing.pdf).

Specified persons in relation to the following specified premises are also reminded to undergo compulsory testing in accordance with the compulsory testing notice tomorrow (December 2):

- Tower 1, Tower 2 and Tower 3, Hampton Place, 11 Hoi Fan Road, Tai Kok Tsui

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).

â€‹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)."