

CHP investigates two additional confirmed cases of COVID-19

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) announced that as of 0.00am, May 25, the CHP was investigating two additional confirmed cases of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), taking the number of cases to 11 836 in Hong Kong so far (comprising 11 835 confirmed cases and one probable case).

The two newly reported cases are local cases with unknown sources.

The first local case with an unknown source involves a 43-year-old Pakistani male (case number: 11835). Upon returning to Hong Kong from Pakistan on March 16 this year, he underwent quarantine at the Silka Far East Hotel Hong Kong in Tsuen Wan from March 16 to April 5. After completion of quarantine, he stayed at his residence at Shek Wah House of Shek Lei (II) Estate, Kwai Chung. The patient is a construction site worker and works at the construction site for contract number NE/2015/01 – Tseung Kwan O – Lam Tin Tunnel – Main Tunnel and Associated Works. The patient underwent testing at a community testing centre on May 9 and the result was negative. He underwent a regular testing at the community testing centre in Wai Tsuen Sports Centre in Tsuen Wan on May 23 and tested positive. The patient has been asymptomatic.

The other local case with an unknown source involves a 37-year-old female Filipino (case number: 11836). She is a domestic helper and arrived in Hong Kong from the Philippines on March 20. She underwent quarantine at the Ramada Hong Kong Grand View in North Point from March 20 to April 10. Upon completion of quarantine, she then stayed in her employer's residence at Tai Tung Wo Liu Village, Sai Kung. In accordance with the requirements of Compulsory Testing Notices (CTNs), she underwent testing at a community testing centre on May 9 and the result was negative. She subsequently underwent another testing at the community testing centre in Ma On Shan Sports Centre on May 22 and tested positive. The test result by the DH's Public Health Laboratory Services Branch revealed that the patient carried the N501Y mutant strain and the E484K mutant gene but did not carry the L452R mutant gene. The patient has been asymptomatic and tested positive for antibodies after admission to hospital. According to the patient, she had been to the Fo Tan Branch Office of the Immigration Department on April 30 and May 11; to Block 8 of Villa Oceania in Ma On Shan, where her relative lived, on May 9 and 16; and to Ma On Shan Park on May 1, 2 and 23.

The Government has exercised the power under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) and relevant persons who had been present at places patronised by the two cases are required to undergo compulsory testing. The CHP's epidemiological investigations and relevant contact tracing on the above cases are ongoing. The CHP has also arranged to transfer the close contacts of the patients to

quarantine centre.

A total of 23 cases have been reported in the past 14 days (May 11 to 24), including six local cases (of which three are from unknown sources) and one possibly local case.

Subsequent to the announcement by the CHP on the updated quarantine arrangements of local COVID-19 cases with the N501Y mutant strain, the CHP reminded that persons who resided or worked within the same building as the residence of relevant cases and had been released from the quarantine centres will be subject to compulsory testing on days 3, 7, 12 and 19 following the announcement of the relevant confirmed cases by the DH. A CTN was issued on May 7 (www.gld.gov.hk/egazette/pdf/202125124e/egn202125124278.pdf). They will also be required to undergo self-monitoring until the 21st day.

Specified persons in relation to the following specified premises are reminded to undergo compulsory testing in accordance with the CTN tomorrow (May 26):

- Tower 6, Island Harbourview, 11 Hoi Fai Road, Tai Kok Tsui.

Members of the public can check the deadlines of compulsory testing for respective specified premises as stipulated in the aforementioned CTN on the Government's website (www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/CTN_Specified_premises_and_Dates_of_Testing.pdf).

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).

Meanwhile, the CHP reminded those who had visited specified venues under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) to receive COVID-19 nucleic acid testing according to the CTNs. The Regulation also requires all household members of close contacts of confirmed cases to undergo a COVID-19 nucleic acid test within a specified period according to CTNs published in the Gazette. The public are also urged to seek medical attention early if symptoms develop and undergo testing as soon as possible.

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).

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 including mutant strains 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. Moreover, vaccination may help keep you from getting seriously ill even if you do get COVID-19 and generally speaking, vaccines can also reduce the chance of transmission by those who have been vaccinated. People vaccinated with the COVID-19 vaccine can also generate herd immunity. Please get vaccinated as soon as possible and book your vaccination at the website (booking.covidvaccine.gov.hk/forms/index.jsp).

"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."

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;
- 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.