

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, September 23, the CHP was investigating two additional confirmed cases of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), taking the number of cases to 12 170 in Hong Kong so far (comprising 12 169 confirmed cases and one probable case).

The newly reported cases are imported cases.

A total of 36 cases have been reported in the past 14 days (September 9 to 22) and all of them are imported cases.

Meanwhile, the CHP is investigating an overseas case of COVID-19 involving a 52-year-old female patient. She tested negative in Hong Kong on September 8 and travelled to the United Kingdom (UK) on September 11 by flight CX255. Her specimen collected in the UK on September 13 tested positive and she had been asymptomatic. She received two doses of COVID-19 vaccination (CoronaVac) on April 27 and May 11 in the Mainland. Epidemiological investigation and contact tracing of the case is continuing. As a prudent measure, the Butterfly On Prat Boutique Hotel located at 21 Prat Avenue, Tsim Sha Tsui, where she resided in Hong Kong during the incubation period will be included in a compulsory testing notice. Specified persons who were present at the relevant venue at specified periods need to undergo compulsory testing on or before the specified date.

In view of the fact that many recent imported cases have joined non-essential travel after vaccination, 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 urged 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 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 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.

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.

On a personal level, members of the public should put on a surgical mask when they need to go out. It is important to wear a mask properly, including performing hand hygiene before wearing and after removing a mask. Hand hygiene should be performed 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. 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 the mouth and nose with tissue paper when sneezing or coughing. Dispose of soiled tissues into a lidded rubbish bin, then wash hands thoroughly.

â€œTo ensure household environmental hygiene, members of the public are advised to maintain drainage pipes properly and regularly (about once a week) by pouring about half a litre of water into each drain outlet (U-trap). They should also pay attention to hygiene when using the toilet by putting the toilet lid down before flushing to avoid spreading germs.