

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, October 8, the CHP was investigating two additional confirmed cases of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), taking the number of cases to 12 254 in Hong Kong so far (comprising 12 253 confirmed cases and one probable case).

Among the newly reported cases announced, one is an imported case and the other one is a local case with unknown sources.

Meanwhile, the CHP is investigating two overseas cases of COVID-19. The first case involves a 10-year-old male patient who lives at 11D Ngau Keng Tsuen, Pat Heung, Yuen Long. He tested negative in Hong Kong on September 26 and travelled to the United Kingdom (UK) with his family on September 28 by flight CX251. His specimen collected in the UK on September 30 subsequently tested positive. He developed symptoms on October 2.

The second case involves a 20-year-old male patient who lives at Tower 8, Pacific Palisades, 1 Braemar Hill Road, North Point. He tested negative in Hong Kong on September 23 and travelled to the UK on September 25 by flight VS207. His specimen collected in the UK on September 28 tested positive. He remained asymptomatic. He received two doses of COVID-19 vaccination (Comirnaty) on July 23 and August 16 in Hong Kong.

The CHP is following up on the cases with the UK health authority and the epidemiological investigations as well as contact tracing of the cases are continuing. As a prudent measure, the places where the patients resided in Hong Kong during the incubation periods have been included in a compulsory testing notice. Specified persons who were present at the relevant venues at specified periods need to undergo compulsory testing on or before tomorrow.

A total of 82 cases have been reported in the past 14 days (September 24 to October 7) and all of them are imported cases.

As a passenger flight (EK384) operated by Emirates arriving from Dubai, the United Arab Emirates, and Bangkok, Thailand, to Hong Kong on October 4 had two passengers confirmed to have COVID-19 by arrival testing, and one passenger failed to comply with the requirements specified under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Regulation of Cross-boundary Conveyances and Travellers) Regulation (Cap. 599H), the DH thus invoked Cap. 599H to prohibit the landing of passenger flights from Dubai and Bangkok operated by Emirates in Hong Kong from October 8 to 21.

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 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."

Separately, according to the testing and quarantine arrangements for local COVID-19 cases with mutant strains, the CHP reminded people that persons who resided or worked within the same building as the residence of relevant cases will be subject to compulsory testing on days 3, 7, 12 and 19 following the announcement of the relevant confirmed cases by the DH. They will also be required to undergo self-monitoring until the 21st day. Relevant deadlines of compulsory testing for respective specified premises are listed on the Government's website 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 (October 9):

- Jones Hive, 8 Jones Street, Causeway Bay
- Block C, Hankow Centre, Tsim Sha 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 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€œâ€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.