

CHP investigates two additional confirmed cases of COVID-19 and two additional Omicron cases

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) announced that as of 0.00am, December 13, the CHP was investigating two additional confirmed cases of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), taking the number of cases to 12 491 in Hong Kong so far (comprising 12 490 confirmed cases and one probable case).

The newly reported cases are imported cases. One of the cases involved mutant strain while the mutation test result of the remaining case is pending. The patients comprise two males aged 50 and 75 respectively. One of them arrived in Hong Kong from a Group A specified place (high-risk) with enhanced surveillance and the other one arrived in Hong Kong from a Group A specified place (high-risk). Both of them tested positive during quarantine.

A total of 61 cases have been reported in the past 14 days (November 29 to December 12) and all of them are imported cases.

Meanwhile, the CHP provided an update on the latest investigations on two imported cases announced yesterday (cases 12490 and 12491), involving a 62-year-old male patient and a 50-year-old female patient respectively who arrived in Hong Kong together from the United Kingdom by flight CX252 on December 10 and tested positive during the "test-and-hold" arrangement upon arrival at the Temporary Specimen Collection Centre at Hong Kong International Airport. Case 12490 had received two doses of COVID-19 vaccination (Comirnaty) in Hong Kong on July 1 and July 22, and case 12491 had also received two doses of COVID-19 vaccination (Comirnaty) in Hong Kong on June 24 and July 15. They had been asymptomatic. The Ct value for the test after admission on December 10 for both patients is less than 30 and both tested positive for antibody. The whole genome sequencing conducted by the DH's Public Health Laboratory Services Branch confirmed that the two cases carried the Variant of Concern Omicron. There are so far seven cases involving Omicron in Hong Kong. Apart from the aforementioned cases, two cases are related to South Africa (cases 12388 and 12404), two cases are related to Nigeria (cases 12432 and 12433) and one case is related to the United States (case 12478).

A spokesman for the CHP said, as the seven cases involving Omicron were all detected at the Hong Kong International Airport restricted area or at a designated quarantine hotel, there has not been a spread in the community. The CHP will adopt the most stringent prevention and control measures to prevent the mutant strain from entering the local community.

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 14):

- The Kimberley Hotel, 28 Kimberley Road, 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 "COVID-19 Thematic Website" (www.coronavirus.gov.hk).

â€‹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)."