

# CHP investigates two cases of severe paediatric influenza A infection

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (January 25) investigating two cases of severe paediatric influenza A infection.

The first case involves a 15-year-old boy with underlying illnesses, who has presented with fever and malaise since January 22. He was admitted to Queen Mary Hospital (QMH) on January 23 and was transferred to QMH's paediatric intensive care unit (PICU) for further management yesterday. His nasopharyngeal aspirate (NPA) tested positive for influenza A virus upon laboratory testing. The clinical diagnosis was influenza A infection complicated with severe pneumonia. He is now in a critical condition.

Initial enquiries revealed that the patient had not received seasonal influenza vaccination for the current season and had no travel history during the incubation period. One of his home contacts had upper respiratory tract infection recently and had recovered. His other home contacts have remained asymptomatic so far.

The second case involves a four-year-old girl with underlying illnesses, who has presented with fever since yesterday. She was admitted to QMH on the same day and subsequently developed respiratory distress and was transferred to QMH's PICU for further management today. Her NPA tested positive for influenza A virus upon laboratory testing. The clinical diagnosis was influenza A infection complicated with severe pneumonia. She is now in a critical condition.

Initial enquiries revealed that the patient had not received seasonal influenza vaccination for the current season and had no travel history during the incubation period.

The CHP's investigations are ongoing.

"The latest surveillance data indicated that the local seasonal influenza activity may continue to rise in the period ahead. We urge the community to continue heightening its vigilance against seasonal influenza. As young children are particularly affected in the influenza season, we appeal to parents who have not yet arranged vaccination for their children in this season to do so as soon as possible to strengthen their personal protection," a spokesman for the CHP said.

"Apart from children, people aged 50 to 64 years, the elderly and those with underlying illnesses who have not yet received influenza vaccination this season are also urged to get vaccinated as early as possible to prevent seasonal influenza as it takes about two weeks for antibodies to develop in the body after vaccination. Medical advice should be sought promptly if influenza-like symptoms develop so that appropriate treatment can be

initiated as early as possible to prevent potential complications. Parents and carers are reminded to render assistance in prevention, care and control for vulnerable people," the spokesman added.

Besides receiving seasonal influenza vaccination as early as possible for personal protection, the public should maintain good personal and environmental hygiene for protection against influenza and other respiratory illnesses. For more information, please visit the CHP's [influenza page](#) and weekly [Flu Express](#).