

CHP investigates two COVID-19 preliminary positive imported cases involving local aircrew

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (December 27) said that it is investigating two preliminary positive imported cases of COVID-19 involving local aircrew. The first case involves a 45-year-old male patient living at One South Lane, No.1 South Lane, Shek Tong Tsui. He tested negative in Hong Kong on December 17 and left Hong Kong on December 21 for the United States by flight CX844 and returned to Hong Kong on December 23 by flight CX841 from the US. His specimen collected upon arrival in the Temporary Specimen Collection Centre at Hong Kong International Airport tested negative for COVID-19.

The patient underwent medical surveillance and regular compulsory testing in accordance with the relevant requirements for exempted persons. According to the patient, except from buying food in the community for a short duration of time and going to a Community Testing Centre to collect sample for testing, he stayed at home during the rest of the time. His sample collected at a Community Testing Centre yesterday (December 26) tested preliminary positive for COVID-19. He developed symptoms including headache, runny nose and cough on the same day. His Ct value was about 16 to 22 and test results on mutant strains are pending.

The patient received two doses of COVID-19 vaccination (Comirnaty) on May 3 and May 24 as well as a dose of COVID-19 vaccination (CoronaVac) on December 13 in Hong Kong. The patient has stayed in Hong Kong during most of the incubation period, as a prudent measure, the Government made a "restriction-testing declaration" tonight for the building where the patient resided in Hong Kong (One South Lane, No.1 South Lane, Shek Tong Tsui). The places where he had visited in Hong Kong during the incubation period will also be included in a compulsory testing notice. Specified persons who were present at the relevant venues at specified periods need to undergo compulsory testing on the specified date. Epidemiological investigation and contact tracing of the case will continue.

The second case involves a 46-year-old male patient living at Peninsula Village Twilight Court, Discovery Bay. He tested negative in Hong Kong on December 19, 20 and 22. He left Hong Kong on December 23 by flight CX840 for the United States and returned to Hong Kong on December 25 by flight CX843 from the US. His specimen collected upon arrival in the Temporary Specimen Collection Centre at Hong Kong International Airport tested negative for COVID-19. His sample collected at a Community Testing Centre today tested preliminary positive for COVID-19. He is asymptomatic with a Ct value of about 31 to 33. The test results on mutant strains are pending. He received two doses of COVID-19 vaccination (Comirnaty) on June 11 and July 2 in Hong Kong.

Epidemiological investigation and contact tracing of the case will continue. As a prudent measure, the places where he had visited in Hong Kong during the incubation period will be included in a compulsory testing notice. Specified persons who were present at the relevant venues at specified periods need to undergo compulsory testing on the specified date.

The spokesman for the CHP said, "The Government has remained vigilant and has been closely monitoring the latest scientific data on mutant strains as well as the epidemic situation of various places. The most stringent anti-epidemic measures will be implemented to prevent the mutant strain from entering the local community."

At the moment, the adverse impact on the epidemic situation caused by the newly emerged mutant strains is not fully known yet, but vaccination is still essential to prevent severe cases and deaths from COVID-19 infection. 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).