

CHP provides update on latest investigations on three imported cases involving local aircrew and related quarantine arrangement

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (November 20) said that according to the latest epidemiological information concerning three imported cases involving local aircrew of Cathay Pacific Airways Limited (cases 12376, 12378 and 12387), the CHP considered that the compulsory quarantine requirement for 111 aircrew members currently under compulsory quarantine in relation to the same hotel the three cases had stayed in Frankfurt, Germany could be lifted.

In CHP's earlier investigations, the three patients claimed that they had not left their hotel rooms during their stay in Frankfurt, implying that the hotel was the only possible common source of their infection. The CHP has received an investigation report regarding the three cases from Cathay Pacific on November 18 evening. Based on the findings of the investigation report by Cathay Pacific, the CHP followed up with the three cases for their itinerary during their layover in Frankfurt. They subsequently admitted that they had left the hotel rooms and visited places in the vicinity of the hotel multiple times and had met with each other or friend outside the hotel.

In parallel, the CHP has provided information on the three cases and the concerned hotel they stayed to the health authority of Germany. Investigation by the health authority of Germany found that no cases in Germany have been reported in connection with the hotel. There is no known outbreak in the hotel.

As the genetic sequences of the three cases are highly similar and according to latest investigation findings, it is very likely that they acquired the infection from each other or a common source outside the hotel and the chance of an outbreak in the hotel was relatively low.

The CHP has further carried out investigation on the aircrew who have been currently put under quarantine in relation to the hotel. It is confirmed that 10 aircrew members should be classified as close contacts of the three cases. For the remaining 111 of them, they had history of stay in the same hotel but had no contact with the three cases outside the hotel in Germany. Cathay Pacific has also verified that the 111 aircrew members had no contact with the three cases outside the hotel.

In view of the latest findings, the CHP has arranged the 111 aircrew members to be released from the quarantine centre today. The remaining 10 close contacts will continue to be quarantined.

The CHP will further investigate if any of the cases have violated the

Prevention and Control of Disease (Disclosure of Information) Regulation (Cap. 599D) and provided inaccurate information to hinder the public health investigation work, and will take enforcement actions if necessary.