

CHP provides update on latest investigations on two COVID-19 imported cases

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (November 12) said that according to the latest analysis of whole genome sequencing conducted by the DH's Public Health Laboratory Services Branch on imported cases involving mutant strains, it is confirmed that the virus strain of imported case 12382 matched the Delta strain sub-lineage AY.4.2, with the identical genetic sequences as the imported case 12374, whose virus strain also matched sub-lineage AY.4.2. It suggests that the two cases might be epidemiologically linked.

Both cases stayed at Four Points by Sheraton Hong Kong Tung Chung located in Tung Chung for compulsory quarantine after arrival in Hong Kong from abroad. They stayed in adjacent rooms on 15th floor. Case 12374 checked in the hotel on November 1 and his specimen taken on November 5 tested positive with a Ct value about 15 and he was sent to hospital on November 6. Case 12382 checked in the hotel on October 22 and while his specimens taken on October 24, 26, 30 and November 2 and 6 all tested negative, his specimen taken on November 9 tested positive with a Ct value about 17 and he was sent to hospital on November 10.

According to the CHP's preliminary epidemiological investigations and the whole genome sequencing analysis, the CHP suspects that case 12382 might have acquired the infection during compulsory quarantine at the hotel. The CHP conducted a site inspection to the hotel with the relevant government departments and experts this evening to investigate and examine if environmental factors were involved in the infection of the cases, including the collection of environmental samples as deemed necessary, to ascertain the possible source of infection.

The CHP took into account the opinions from experts and decided to carry out prudent measures on infectious disease control. The CHP will arrange for persons who had stayed from November 1 to 6 on the concerned floor of North Wing in the hotel to undergo compulsory quarantine at the Penny's Bay Quarantine Centre.

The CHP's epidemiological investigation is ongoing.