

CHP reminds relevant residents to comply with “restriction-testing declaration” operation on two cases tested preliminarily positive for SARS-CoV-2 virus

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (January 12) reminded members of the public that "restriction-testing declaration" (RTD) have been made for the residences of two of the cases tested preliminarily positive for SARS-CoV-2 virus the CHP is following up. The CHP strongly reminds relevant residents that they must comply with the RTD operations. Any person who fails to present an SMS notification with a test result or wear a wristband as proof of having undergone testing breaches the compulsory testing notice and may be liable to a fine of \$5,000. The person will also be issued with a compulsory testing order, requiring him/her to undergo testing within a specified time frame. Failure to comply with the compulsory testing order or the RTD is an offence and the offender may be liable to a fine of level 4 (\$25,000) and imprisonment for six months.

The first case involves a 19-year-old male patient. According to the patient, he is a family member of case 12913 not living together and claimed to be living in Maya Tower 1, 8 Shung Shan Street, Yau Tong. He is a student at Hong Kong Tang King Po College and last went to school on January 7. He developed symptoms on January 11 and went to a community testing centre on the same day for test and tested preliminarily positive, with a Ct value of less than 30. He had not received COVID-19 vaccination.

The second case involves a 20-year-old male patient living in Pik Long House, Shek Pai Wan Estate, Aberdeen. He is a student at the University of Hong Kong and last went to school in mid-December last year. He also works part-time in Dustykid Tea Shop – Light as Dust in Sheung Wan and Wan Chai and last went to work on January 6. He went to a community testing centre on January 11 for test in accordance with the relevant compulsory testing notice and tested preliminarily positive. He developed symptoms on January 8 with a Ct value of less than 30. He received two doses of COVID-19 vaccination (Comirnaty) on August 4 and August 25, 2021 in Hong Kong.

The CHP's preliminary investigation revealed that he visited the Nabe Urawa at Hysan Place in Causeway Bay for dinner in the evening on January 4 and that earlier cases 12838 and 12882 also dined in the restaurant at similar time. The CHP suspected that his infection may be related to cases 12838 and 12882. The CHP also appealed to those who had dined in the Nabe Urawa at Hysan Place in Causeway Bay after 6pm on January 4 to call the CHP's hotlines at 2125 1111 or 2125 1122 to facilitate the CHP's epidemiological investigations and contact tracing.

The CHP is now investigating the places where the patients visited during incubation periods and will carry out whole genome sequencing analysis in order to ascertain the infection sources and to terminate the silent transmission chains in the community. The CHP also urges all individuals who are in doubt about their own health condition, or individuals with exposure to infection risk, to undergo testing promptly for early identification of infected persons.

The Government has made "restriction-testing declaration" tonight for the buildings where the patients resided (Maya Tower 1, 8 Shung Shan Street, Yau Tong; and Pik Long House, Shek Pai Wan Estate, Aberdeen) and persons who resided or worked at the buildings will be subject to increased compulsory testing frequency. The places where they had visited during the incubation periods 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.

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 strains from spreading in 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).