

COVID-19 Testing Backlog

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

To tie in with the "Enhanced Laboratory Surveillance Programme" of the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH), the Hospital Authority (HA) contracted a test service vendor to arrange COVID-19 test. The HA was notified by the vendor that some of the test procedures were lengthened due to environmental contamination and subsequent thorough disinfection required in the laboratory. Some of the tests and notification of negative results cannot be completed within 48 hours as the contract terms required.

The HA has reported the incident to the Food and Health Bureau (FHB) and DH. Starting from today (March 8), some of the backlog specimens will be arranged to test in Public Health Laboratory Centre (PHLC) of DH and other three vendors.

According to the report of the vendor, it has completed the test for all specimens received on or before March 2 and most of the March 3 specimens. It is expected that the test for the rest of March 3 specimens and most of the March 4 specimens, around 20 000 specimens will be completed today. The PHLC and the three vendors will continue to render assistance and it is expected that the test for the rest of specimens will be completed in coming days.

The HA is concerned about the incident. The HA has tasked the vendor to review the testing procedures and enhance contingency. The HA will follow the incident with the vendor seriously in accordance to the contract terms to avoid the occurrence of similar incident.