

DH receives incident report of wrongly sent COVID-19 test result SMS notifications by testing service provider

The Department of Health (DH) yesterday evening (November 30) received a report from a service provider of COVID-19 testing that, owing to technical errors during data uploading, members of the public who were tested in March this year and had already got negative results received the negative test result SMS notifications again on November 28. The incident involved 216 persons. No positive cases were involved.

It is understood that staff of the testing service provider concerned, BGI, had wrongly uploaded old negative results to the DH's relevant information system on November 28. This had led to SMS messages being automatically sent under the existing setting to the persons involved. The messages carried the recipients' own test results on March 20 and the specimen bottle numbers.

In accordance with advice from the DH, BGI has informed the affected persons about the incident with apologies via SMS messages. There has not been any laboratory service involved in the incident and it has no relationship with the accuracy or validity of the testing. The wrongly uploaded information has been handled and testing data in the DH's information system has not been affected by this error.

In view of the above incident, the Government has instructed the service provider to follow up on the incident, particularly in reviewing the current workflow of data entry and result uploading, so as to ensure that relevant improvement measures are duly implemented with a view to preventing the occurrence of similar incidents.