

## FHB requests testing service provider to take serious follow-up on data input error

During regular data checking of COVID-19 testing system on March 18, the Food and Health Bureau (FHB) detected some human errors committed by a testing service provider during uploading of negative test results. As a result, the system was unable to notify citizens of the negative testing results through SMS messages on mobile phones. The incident involved some 2 800 deep throat saliva specimens submitted to the Hospital Authority or the Department of Health for testing between February 28 and March 2. No positive cases were involved.

The concerned testing service provider is BGI. It is understood that testing of the concerned specimens have completed in early March and all specimens were tested negative. However, concerned staff made an error when inputting the dates, and the system was thus unable to issue testing result via SMS messages to relevant persons timely.

The FHB has requested the testing service provider to review the test results and rectify the registration information. Affected persons may receive SMS messages containing the result of earlier test automatically sent out by the system. The incident did not affect the accuracy or validity of the test, and it did not involve any loss of personal data. The FHB extended apologies to those affected for any inconvenience caused.

This incident of data input error is the second similar one encountered by BGI recently. The FHB finds it extremely undesirable and has issued a warning letter to instruct BGI to investigate the incident seriously, and to expedite the implementation of relevant improvement measures. If the situation does not improve within a short time, the FHB will take further follow-up actions in accordance with contract terms. The FHB is also reviewing the design of the computer system and discussing with various testing service providers on proposals to step up preventive measures in order to avoid any chance of incorrect data input.