

# Government Launches Preparedness and Response Plan for Novel Infectious Disease of Public Health Significance

The Government today (January 4) launched the Preparedness and Response Plan for Novel Infectious Disease of Public Health Significance (The Plan). In parallel, the Serious Response Level was activated with immediate effect.

The Plan sets out the Government's preparedness and response plan in case of an outbreak of Novel Infectious Disease of Public Health Significance. A three-tier response level is adopted in the plan. Three response levels, namely Alert, Serious and Emergency, will be activated based on the risk assessment of the Novel Infectious Disease of Public Health Significance that may affect Hong Kong and its health impact on the community.

Upon the risk assessment of the cluster of cases of viral pneumonia with unknown cause in Wuhan reported by the National Health Commission, the Serious Response Level was activated. Under the Serious Response Level, the immediate health impact caused by Novel Infectious Disease of Public Health Significance on local population is moderate.

" 'Novel Infectious Disease of Public Health Significance' refers to any infectious disease caused by a pathogen unknown to cause human disease before, but may have changed its property to cause human infection with or without the ability of efficient human-to-human transmission. The disease has the potential to lead to international spread and public health emergency. The current cluster of viral pneumonia cases in Wuhan can be regarded as a Novel Infectious Disease of Public Health Significance," a spokesman for the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health said.

"The Government will assess the risk from time to time in view of the latest scientific evidence and situation, activate or deactivate the response level and implement corresponding measures," the spokesman said.

For more information, please refer to the Plan which has been uploaded to the CHP's website ([www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/govt\\_preparedness\\_and\\_response\\_plan\\_for\\_novel\\_infectious\\_disease\\_of\\_public\\_health\\_significance\\_eng.pdf](http://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/govt_preparedness_and_response_plan_for_novel_infectious_disease_of_public_health_significance_eng.pdf)).