

HA implements contingency measures amid increasing cases of measles

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

In view of the recent surge in measles cases, the Central Committee on Infectious Disease and Emergency Responses of the Hospital Authority (HA) today (March 25) convened an ad hoc meeting, which was joined by representatives from the Centre for Health Protection (CHP), to discuss the risk assessment and preparedness of public hospitals.

It was agreed that measures need to be implemented in public hospitals for early diagnosis and isolation of possible measles cases and to provide vaccinations to staff in need, including those who have never been vaccinated or those with inadequate immunity, to reduce the risk of nosocomial infections.

The spokesperson for HA said notifications as well as updated disease information have been issued earlier to remind frontline healthcare staff to be vigilant towards patient with symptoms of measles. Suspected cases will need to be reported and treated under isolation with specimens sent to the Public Health Laboratory Services Branch of CHP for testing.

"Healthcare staff measles vaccination programme will commence next week. Vaccinations will be provided to staff working in high risk departments, such as paediatric, obstetrics and gynaecology, haematology, clinical oncology, intensive care units and isolation wards in the first phase."

According to information provided by the CHP, there are people who have never been vaccinated while local residents born between the year 1967 and 1978 do not have sufficient immunity against measles due to their single dose vaccination.

The HA will continue to closely collaborate with CHP to monitor the development and keep the general public and professionals posted of the most updated situation and relevant information. The enhanced measures will be reviewed accordingly in due course.