

Latest progress in follow up on novel coronavirus infection in Hong Mei House, Cheung Hong Estate

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) is today (February 11) continuing to proactively follow up on the cases of novel coronavirus infection in Hong Mei House, Cheung Hong Estate in Tsing Yi. Questionnaires with the households at the A07 units of Hong Mei House had completed. Apart from the close contacts of the resident involved in the case confirmed yesterday (February 10), so far no additional case has been recorded from other households.

Personnel from the CHP have successfully traced all 34 households of all the A07 units of Hong Mei House. Active case finding was conducted to identify if there are undiagnosed cases. Five residents who were symptomatic were sent to hospitals for isolation and treatment. All of the respiratory samples tested negative for novel coronavirus.

Among the 34 households, two are from the confirmed cases, about 100 residents from 30 households are being arranged to be transferred to quarantine centres while the remaining two households currently do not reside in their units due to individual reasons.

The CHP is continuing epidemiological investigations into the cases of novel coronavirus infection in Hong Mei House. Together with the Environment Bureau, and departments including Housing Department (HD), the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department and the Architectural Services Department, the CHP is investigating and examine if environmental factors were involved in the infection of the cases.

According to the HD's information, the HD's Maintenance Surveyor and technical inspection team has conducted a detailed inspection at the unit A07 of Hong Mei House where the 62-year-old female patient resides. The vent pipe at the toilet which was altered without permission has been sealed up. The inspection team will inspect other 07 units in the building. If unauthorised alteration of vent pipes in the toilets are detected, immediate and proper follow up actions will be taken.

As the investigations by relevant departments are ongoing, the CHP advised that, as a precautionary measure, the residents of Cheung Hong Estate at this stage should not open the window or turn on the ventilator when using the toilet.

The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department and the HD will conduct thorough cleaning and disinfection for the building. The DH today organised a health talk for residents of Cheung Hong Estate to give health advice on the prevention of pneumonia and respiratory tract infection to residents.

A spokesman for the CHP said, "The public is strongly urged to maintain at all times strict personal and environmental hygiene which is key to personal protection against infection and prevention of the spread of the disease in the community."

The spokesman said, "On the personal level, members of the public should wear a surgical mask when having respiratory symptoms, taking public transport or staying in crowded places. They should also perform hand hygiene frequently, especially before touching the mouth, nose or eyes. The public should go out less and reduce social activities, and maintain appropriate social distance with other people as far as possible."

"As for household environmental hygiene, members of the public are advised to maintain drainage pipes properly and regularly pour water into drain outlets (U-traps); after using the toilet, they should put the toilet lid down before flushing to avoid spreading germs."

For other health advice and information, please visit the CHP's dedicated webpage (www.gov.hk/ncv) on novel coronavirus infection.

The CHP has set up a hotline (2125 1122), which operates from 8am to midnight daily, for public enquiries.