

New designated Mpox vaccination centre set up by CHP

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (July 26) reminded members of the public to heighten vigilance against Mpox (also known as Monkeypox) infection. According to the CHP's information, there is an upsurge of confirmed Mpox cases recorded in Hong Kong recently involving men who have conducted high risk sexual practices with men. As such, the CHP has set up a designated Mpox vaccination centre which will commence operation tomorrow (July 27) for high-risk groups to receive vaccination by appointment. Vaccination is an effective way to prevent Mpox and the CHP strongly urged high-risk individuals to receive vaccination early and seek medical attention as soon as possible if they experience Mpox symptoms.

The new designated Mpox vaccination centre situated at 2/F, CHP building, 147C Argyle Street, Mong Kok, will operate from 9am to 8pm from Monday to Friday (except public holidays). Individuals belonging to the high-risk target groups can make a booking by email (mpv_booking@dh.gov.hk), or call the booking line 2547 1900 during office hours (operates from Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays) from 9am to 5.30pm) starting today.

A total of 16 Mpox cases have been recorded in Hong Kong so far involving 16 men aged 25 to 59, among which eight of them are recorded in July this year. The CHP's epidemiological investigations revealed that the eight cases involved men who have sex with men (MSM) and they have high-risk behavior during the incubation periods, including having sexual practices with strangers. Four of them did not have travel history and the initial investigation of the CHP showed that the cases are local infections with unknown sources. The results reflected Mpox virus transmission might have occurred among local high-risk groups and cannot rule out the possibility of an outbreak. The CHP is working with non-governmental organisations serving local high-risk groups to disseminate health advices to target groups.

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A CHP spokesperson stated that Mpox is generally transmitted through direct and intimate sexual contact with infectious lesions of symptomatic patient. People should not conduct high risk sexual practices, i.e, unprotected sex, sex with unknown person or multiple sexual partners. According to latest scientific evidence, the transmission risk through casual social contact, including close family contact is extremely low.

Among the above-mentioned 16 confirmed Mpox cases, 11 of them did not receive Mpox vaccination, while another two did not complete the two-dose course. According to the recommendation by the Scientific Committee on Vaccine Preventable Diseases and the Scientific Committee on Emerging and Zoonotic Diseases under the CHP, a two-dose regime is required while those who have received smallpox vaccine will only need one dose. A spokesman for the CHP appealed to high-risk target groups, including individuals with high-

risk sexual practices, e.g. MSM, having multiple sexual partners, sex workers, having a history of sexually transmitted infection within the past 12 months, to avoid close physical contact with persons suspected of contracting Mpox. They should take precautionary measures, especially to receive Mpox vaccination as soon as possible.

The Government's Mpox vaccination programme commenced on October 5 last year, under which Hong Kong residents belonging to high-risk groups (including individuals with high risk sexual practices; healthcare workers responsible for caring of patients with confirmed Mpox; laboratory personnel working with zoonotic pox viruses; and animal care personnel with high risk of exposure in case of Mpox occurrence in animals in Hong Kong) can receive vaccination on a voluntary basis. As at June 30, 2023, more than 10 000 doses of vaccine were administered.

Apart from the newly set up designated vaccination centre, high-risk target groups can receive an Mpox walk-in vaccination at all of the DH's Social Hygiene Service Clinics (SoCHS) (namely Chai Wan SoCHS, Wan Chai Male SoCHS, Wan Chai Female SoCHS, Yau Ma Tei Male SoCHS, Yau Ma Tei Female SoCHS, Yung Fung Shee SoCHS, Fanling SoCHS and Tuen Mun SoCHS). Meanwhile, the DH's Integrated Treatment Centre in Kowloon Bay, and the Hospital Authority's Special Medical Clinics at Queen Elizabeth Hospital and Princess Margaret Hospital will continue to provide Mpox vaccination services for their clients.

The Government has activated the Alert level of the preparedness and response plan for the disease in September last year and will continue to assess the risk in view of the latest scientific evidence and situation, and implement corresponding control measures. The CHP had also set up an Mpox telephone hotline (2125 2373) earlier, which enables those who suspect or are concerned they have had high-risk contact with confirmed patients, in particular men who have sex with men or those who have sexual practices with strangers, to make enquiries and receive relevant health advice.

For more details, please visit the CHP's page on [Mpox](#).