

Public hospitals stay alert for enhanced contingency response to Dengue Fever

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

In view of the continual confirmation of local patient cases of Dengue Fever, the Hospital Authority (HA) Central Committee on Infectious Disease and Emergency Responses this (August 21) morning convened another ad hoc meeting again with representatives from the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) to assess the latest risk situation as well as coordinate on the contingency response measures of public hospitals.

"Public hospitals have raised its alertness and got prepared for the contingency response measures for managing the possible outbreak of Dengue Fever in Hong Kong", Dr Vivien Chuang, HA Chief Manager (Infection, Emergency and Contingency) said after the meeting.

"The meeting today has deliberated on the enhanced response measures which include the placing extra orders of several thousand sets of Dengue Fever rapid test kits. Also as an early preparation for the scenario where we have to relieve the burden on Accident and Emergency Departments if the patients with Dengue Fever symptoms are overwhelming, the phased activation of 'Designated Clinics' would then have to be considered to help take care of the suspected cases," Dr Chuang added.

Following the first ad hoc meeting of the HA Central Committee on Infectious Disease and Emergency Responses last week, a number of enhanced measures have already been implemented to manage the potential risk of spreading of Dengue Fever:

- Activation of the "e-Dengue" enhanced surveillance system. Hospitals will report information on suspected cases, rapid test outcome and condition of patients to facilitate real-time review and monitoring by HA, hospitals and Centre for Health Protection (CHP) on the most updated condition of every suspected and confirmed cases through this electronic platform. CHP could also follow up on the investigation of public health accordingly;
- Enhanced laboratory services under the seven hospital clusters to provide rapid test for Dengue Fever on a seven-day-a-week basis to facilitate clinical diagnosis;
- Enhanced mosquito control measures in public hospitals and clinics as well as their construction sites to minimise mosquito breeding. The measures include weekly fogging of insecticides at outdoor areas, application of larvicide oil and sand at water drainage, and daily

inspection of hospital areas to clear stagnate water. For those hospitals with admission of confirmed Dengue Fever patients, the hospital will enhance the frequency of fogging insecticides to every other day continuously for one month; and

- Enhanced internal communication to enable frontline staff to get familiarised with the enhanced measures of the contingency plan on prevention of Dengue Fever outbreak. Infection Control Teams of cluster hospitals have been conducting staff forums and talks to explain and discuss on the arrangements of the contingency measures.

The HA will continue to closely collaborate with CHP to monitor the situation of Dengue Fever infection in Hong Kong and to keep the general public and healthcare professionals posted of the most updated situation and relevant information.