Queen Elizabeth Hospital announcement concerning a corpse testing positive for COVID-19

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority.

The spokesperson for Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH) made the following announcement today (February 11) concerning a corpse that tested positive for COVID-19:

An 84-year-old male patient (case number: 10722) who was found unconscious at home on February 8 morning was sent to QEH by ambulance. Upon arrival at the Accident and Emergency Department (AED) of QEH at 11.15am, the patient was sent to a resuscitation room in negative pressure for cardiopulmonary resuscitation and intubation to assist his breathing. His condition continued to deteriorate and he eventually succumbed at 12.15pm.

A domestic helper of the male patient attended the AED of QEH at about 1am on February 10. She was arranged to have a COVID-19 test and the test result was preliminary positive. The hospital contacted Kwai Chung Public Mortuary this morning (February 11) and was informed that the corpse tested positive for COVID-19 virus.

The Department of Pathology this morning retrieved the patient's blood specimens collected on February 8, and confirmed that the SARS-CoV-2 antibody was present on February 8. Hence no staff or patients were identified as close contacts.

The hospital has completed a thorough cleaning and disinfection of the AED, resuscitation room, patient waiting area, public washrooms, staff washrooms and a rest room. The hospital will continue to closely monitor the health condition of staff members and communicate with the Centre for Health Protection on the latest progress.

The hospital has again reminded staff to conduct risk assessments and test the deceased for COVID-19 if needed before transferring a deceased person to a public mortuary.