

SFH visits Designated Quarantine Hotel Scheme Command Centre (with photo)

The Secretary for Food and Health, Professor Sophia Chan, today (January 4) visited the Designated Quarantine Hotel Scheme (DQHS) Command Centre located at the Central Government Offices to get a better grasp of the overall situation of the DQHS as well as the mode of operation, anti-epidemic measures and disinfection procedures adopted in designated quarantine hotels (DQHs).

Accompanied by the Director of the Office of the DQHS (DQHS Office), Mr Philip Yung, Professor Chan received a briefing from the Deputy Director of the DQHS Office, Mr Vincent Fung; the Compliance Advisor (Infection Control) of the DQHS Office, Dr Edmond Ma; and the Compliance Controller (Operations and Security) of the DQHS Office, Mr Joseph Au, on the latest situation of the DQHS and the daily operation of the command centre as well as the anti-epidemic measures and security inspections being undertaken by DQHs. She also exchanged views with frontline colleagues of the dedicated compliance team.

"The Government has imposed stringent requirements on anti-epidemic measures in DQHs. Inspections are conducted on a daily basis to ensure hotels strictly execute the infection control measures in accordance with the requirements, and that the staff of DQHs have fulfilled the relevant vaccination requirements and received regular testing," Professor Chan said.

The dedicated compliance team of the DQHS Office has so far conducted some 17 400 inspections and handled over 330 cases of violations since the launch of the DQHS. These cases mainly involved quarantined persons leaving their guestrooms. The dedicated compliance team took timely follow-up action and carried out investigation, and persons confirmed to have breached relevant requirements were sent to a quarantine centre.

As some of the imported Omicron cases are confirmed in DQHs, the Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health has requested DQHs to conduct additional infection control measures and surveillance with a view to further reducing the possible risk of infection. If an Omicron case has stayed in a DQH, daily testing will be arranged for those who have been staying in adjacent and opposite rooms of the room of the Omicron case until seven days after the transfer out of the patient concerned.

"In view of the increasing number of confirmed cases involving the Omicron variant recently, I conducted community testing centre, mobile specimen collection station and Community Vaccination Centre visits on Sunday (January 2) to understand their operations in response to the rising number of people receiving testing and vaccination," she added.

The Government fully implemented the DQHS and the Designated Transportation Scheme on December 22, 2020, requiring all arrivals from

specified places to undergo compulsory quarantine at DQHs as a measure to further prevent the importation of COVID-19 cases and reduce contact between arrivals and the local community.

