

Suspension of temporary test centre at AsiaWorld-Expo

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

In response to the large number of inbound travellers from Europe and the United States, the Hospital Authority (HA) had set up temporary test centres at AsiaWorld-Expo and North Lantau Hospital since March 20 to arrange tests for travellers with upper respiratory symptoms for early identification of the COVID-19 infection.

Starting from April 5, the test services have been consolidated at the test centre at AsiaWorld-Expo. With the declining number of inbound travellers, the test centre at AsiaWorld Expo will be suspended from noon tomorrow (April 19) to refocus manpower resources to hospital services.

The HA spokesperson said, "The HA Major Incident Control Centre will liaise closely with the Department of Health to arrange the transfer of inbound travellers with respiratory symptoms, people undergoing home quarantine or close contacts of confirmed cases to various Accident and Emergency Departments (A&E) for the tests required. They may need to wait at the A&E test and triage centres for the test results, which usually take several hours."

The HA thanked the teams of healthcare workers and supporting staff for setting up the test centres within a very tight timeline to implement the instructions of the Government's Steering Committee in relation to the COVID-19 virus. The appreciation was also extended to the participating colleagues from different hospital clusters who help run the service around the clock.

"The pre-hospital test service has played an important diversion role by largely reducing the number of suspected cases admitted to the hospitals for testing and alleviating the demand pressure for first-tier isolation beds. As of yesterday (April 17), of the over 1 400 specimens collected at the two test centres, about 100 confirmed cases were identified. The process of on-the-spot testing and the release of test results have saved a total of 1 300 admissions to the hospital, leaving more public hospital isolation facilities for confirmed cases."