

CHP investigates case of invasive meningococcal infection

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (February 8) investigating a case of invasive meningococcal infection, a communicable disease transmitted by direct contact with droplets from carriers or infected persons.

The case involves a 76-year-old male with underlying diseases, who presented with fever and malaise since February 6. He visited North Lantau Hospital on the same day and was admitted to Princess Margaret Hospital for treatment. His clinical diagnosis was meningococcaemia. The patient is now in stable condition. His blood sample tested positive for *Neisseria meningitidis* upon laboratory testing.

Initial enquiries revealed that the patient had no travel history during the incubation period. His household contacts have remained asymptomatic so far. The CHP's investigation is continuing.

"Meningococcal infection is caused by a bacterium known as meningococcus. It is mainly transmitted by direct contact through respiratory secretions, including droplets from the nose and throat, from infected persons. The incubation period varies from two to 10 days, and is commonly three or four days," a spokesman for the CHP said.

The clinical pictures among the infected may vary. Severe illness may result when the bacteria invade the bloodstream (meningococcaemia) or the membranes that envelop the brain and spinal cord (meningococcal meningitis).

Meningococcaemia is characterised by a sudden onset of fever, intense headache, purpura, shock and even death in severe cases. Meningococcal meningitis is characterised by high fever, severe headache and a stiff neck followed by drowsiness, vomiting, fear of bright light, or a rash. It can cause brain damage or even death. The brain damage may lead to intellectual impairment, mental retardation, hearing loss and electrolyte imbalance. Invasive meningococcal infection can be complicated by arthritis, inflammation of the heart muscle, inflammation of the posterior chamber of the eye or chest infection.

Meningococcal infection is a serious illness. Patients should be treated promptly with antibiotics.

To prevent meningococcal infection, members of the public are advised to take heed of the following measures:

- Wash hands with liquid soap and water properly, especially when they are dirtied by respiratory secretions, e.g. after sneezing, and clean hands with alcohol-based handrub when they are not visibly soiled;

- Cover the nose and mouth while sneezing or coughing, hold the spit with a tissue, dispose of nasal and mouth discharge in a lidded rubbish bin, and wash hands immediately;
- Avoid crowded places;
- Avoid close contact with patients who have a fever or severe headache;
- Travellers to high-risk areas may consult doctors for meningococcal vaccination; and
- Travellers returning from high-risk areas should seek medical advice if they become ill, and should discuss their recent travel history with their doctor.

The public may visit the CHP's [website](#) for more information on meningococcal infection.

Cluster of Influenza A cases at Kowloon Hospital

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The spokesperson for Kowloon Hospital (KH) made the following announcement today (February 8):

Nine patients (aged 64 to 92) in a male rehabilitation ward have presented with respiratory symptoms since February 3. Appropriate viral tests were arranged for the patients and their test results were positive to Influenza A. Two patients are currently hospitalised at United Christian Hospital and Queen Elizabeth Hospital respectively for other medical needs, and the remaining seven patients are being treated in isolation in KH. All the patients are in stable condition.

Infection control measures have already been enhanced according to established guidelines. The hospital will continue to closely monitor the conditions of the patients in the ward concerned.

The cases have been reported to the Hospital Authority Head Office and the Centre for Health Protection for necessary follow-up.

HKMA publishes Report on Loss-

Absorbing Capacity Requirements Implementation in Hong Kong

The following is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority:

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) published today (February 8) the Report on Loss-Absorbing Capacity Requirements Implementation in Hong Kong. This report provides an overview of the loss-absorbing capacity (LAC) requirements implementation programme in Hong Kong, outlines the progress made and summarises the HKMA's observations and related policy expectations.

LAC refers to financial resources of a financial institution (FI) which can be used to absorb losses and support recapitalisation in the event the FI becomes likely to fail. The availability of sufficient LAC is crucial for stabilising a failing FI and restoring it to viability in an orderly resolution (Note 1), thereby mitigating risks posed to financial stability. By allowing losses to be imposed on shareholders and LAC debt instruments holders, LAC serves as a disincentive to excessive risk-taking by an FI and protects public money.

To ensure adequate LAC resources for resolution purposes, the HKMA introduced the Financial Institutions (Resolution) (Loss-absorbing Capacity Requirements-Banking Sector) Rules (LAC Rules), which commenced operation on December 14, 2018. Over the past five years, the HKMA has been working closely with relevant authorized institutions (AIs), including all domestic systemically important AIs, to build up a layer of LAC resources as part of the resolution planning process (Note 2).

This report covers the LAC positions of AIs, issuances and features of LAC debt instruments, approaches to ensuring compliance with LAC Rules requirements, the interaction between LAC requirements and the capital regime, and other matters pertinent to the implementation.

The Chief Executive of the HKMA, Mr Eddie Yue, said, "Establishing sufficient LAC resources is an important aspect in enhancing the resolvability of banks and strengthening the resilience of the Hong Kong's banking system. We are delighted to share some of the key developments and milestones achieved. As part of our ongoing resolution planning process, the HKMA will continue to work closely with relevant banks on their build-up and maintenance of LAC resources in a prudent and proportionate manner, taking into account international experiences, as well as evolving economic and market conditions."

The [report](#) is available on the HKMA website.

Note 1: Resolution is a process to manage the potential failure of an FI in an orderly manner, with the purpose of maintaining the stability and effective working of the financial system, while seeking to protect public money. The Financial Institutions (Resolution) Ordinance (FIRO), which came

into effect on July 7, 2017, establishes the legal basis for a cross-sectoral resolution regime in Hong Kong. Under the FRO, the Monetary Authority is the resolution authority for banking sector entities which include all AIs.

Note 2: In order for resolution to be feasible and credible, FIs need to be organised and managed at all times in a way that facilitates the effective use of powers by the resolution authorities in the event of a potential failure. To this end, the HKMA sets resolution standards and conducts resolution planning for individual AIs well in advance of any actual distress. Through the resolution planning process, the HKMA works with relevant AIs to implement necessary changes to their legal structures, business operations and/or financial resources in order to enhance their resolvability.

Principal Officials of HKSAR Government continue year-end caring visits in 18 districts

The year-end caring visits in 18 districts co-ordinated by the Home Affairs Department continued today (February 8). Principal Officials (POs) of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government continued to tour various districts today, including Yau Tsim Mong, Wan Chai, Southern, Central and Western, Kwai Tsing, Sai Kung, Sha Tin and Tai Po Districts, to visit grassroots families to distribute blessing bags in celebration of the Chinese New Year.

Accompanied by the District Officer (Yau Tsim Mong), Mr Edward Yu, the Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Chan Kwok-ki, and the Permanent Secretary for Home and Youth Affairs, Ms Shirley Lam, together with a Yau Tsim Mong District Council member and a representative from the District Services and Community Care Team (Care Team) (Yau Tsim Mong) visited Indian and Bangladesh families living in Tsim Sha Tsui to learn about their daily lives and needs in Hong Kong. Chinese New Year fruits were presented on behalf of the HKSAR Government to demonstrate care, and share the festive joy with citizens.

Accompanied by the District Officer (Wan Chai), Miss Fanny Cheung, the Deputy Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Cheuk Wing-hing, together with Wan Chai District Council members and representatives from the Care Team (Wan Chai) visited elderly people and grassroots families living in Lai Tak Tsuen, Tai Hang. Accompanied by the District Officer (Southern), Mr Francis Cheng, the Deputy Financial Secretary, Mr Michael Wong, together with a Southern District Council member and a representative from the Care Team (Southern) visited a singleton elderly person and an elderly couple living in Shek Pai

Wan Estate, Southern District. Accompanied by the District Officer (Central and Western), Mr David Leung, the Secretary for Security, Mr Tang Ping-keung, together with Central and Western District Council members and representatives from the Care Team (Central and Western) visited elderly families living in Central and Western District. Accompanied by the District Officer (Kwai Tsing), Mr Huggin Tang, the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Algernon Yau, together with a Kwai Tsing District Council member and representatives from the Care Team (Kwai Tsing) visited singleton elderly and grassroots family living in Kwai Chung.

ã€€ã€€In addition, accompanied by the District Officer (Sai Kung), Miss Kathy Ma, the Secretary for Development, Ms Bernadette Linn, together with Sai Kung District Council members and representatives from the Care Team (Sai Kung) visited singleton elderly people and grassroots households living in Sheung Tak Estate, Tseung Kwan O. Accompanied by the District Officer (Sha Tin), Mr Frederick Yu, the Secretary for Innovation, Technology and Industry, Professor Sun Dong, together with Sha Tin District Council members and representatives from the Care Team (Sha Tin) visited an elderly couple and singleton elderly people living in Lung Hang Estate, Tai Wai. Accompanied by the District Officer (Tai Po), Ms Eunice Chan, the Secretary for Labour and Welfare, Mr Chris Sun, together with Tai Po District Council members and representatives from the Care Team (Tai Po) visited elderly people living in the vicinity of Tai Po Market.

ã€€ã€€The POs of the Government will continue to visit grassroots families tomorrow (February 9) to deliver Chinese New Year blessing bags and seasonal greetings.

DH conducts interdepartmental operation against distribution of smoking product advertisements in public housing estates (with photos)

The Department of Health (DH) today (February 8) said that, with the Lunar New Year approaching, its Tobacco and Alcohol Control Office (TACO) has conducted a joint operation with the Police and the Housing Department (HD) in January and February this year, during which inspection and publicity activities were carried out in 11 public housing estates located in different districts across Hong Kong, with a view to combating the distribution of smoking product leaflets in public housing estates.

During the operation, in addition to patrolling the estate, officers from the TACO reminded estate security personnel and residents to observe the

relevant laws and not to purchase illicit cigarettes. They were also provided with information on what to do when a suspected violation is found.

In accordance with the Smoking (Public Health) Ordinance (Cap. 371) (the Ordinance), no person shall distribute any smoking product advertisement (including any promotion leaflets). Any person who contravenes the regulation is liable to a maximum fine of \$50,000. In 2023, the TACO received about 21 130 complaints related to the Ordinance, including about 1 070 complaints (accounting for approximately 5 per cent of the total) involving the distribution of smoking product advertisements. The TACO will follow up and investigate every complaint regarding the distribution of smoking product advertisements, and will also refer any suspected cases of illicit cigarettes that involve violations of the Dutiable Commodities Ordinance (Cap. 109) to the relevant department for further investigation.

In addition, a co-operation mechanism has been established among the TACO, the Police and the HD, targeting the distribution of smoking product leaflets in public housing estates. When any smoking product leaflet distribution is detected at public housing estates, the housing estate staff will contact the Police for assistance and subsequently refer the case to the TACO for further investigation. Since 2021, the TACO has successfully prosecuted 12 offenders (involved in 13 cases) for distributing smoking product leaflets. The highest penalty for these convicted cases was a fine of \$8,000.

A spokesman for the DH stressed that the department has always been closely monitoring and taking stringent enforcement actions against violations of the Ordinance (including the distribution of smoking product advertisements). The spokesman reiterated that all tobacco products, regardless of whether they are duty paid or not, pose significant health risks. Smokers should quit smoking as early as possible for their own health and that of others. Information on smoking cessation can also be obtained from www.livetobaccofree.hk.



