

Sha Tau Kok Post Office to extend January 6 business hours to tie in with Second Phase Opening-up of Sha Tau Kok Launching Ceremony

Hongkong Post announced today (January 2) that to tie in with the Second Phase Opening-up of Sha Tau Kok Launching Ceremony and the Sha Tau Kok Funfair on January 6 (Saturday), the Sha Tau Kok Post Office will extend its business hours to 4pm that day. Members of the public can buy the six postcards featuring the winning entries of the Sha Tau Kok Photo and Video Competition, which are for sale exclusively at the Sha Tau Kok Post Office, and apply the two cachets provided at the Post Office. General postal services will also be provided at the Sha Tau Kok Post Office on that day.

CHP investigates case of severe paediatric COVID-19

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (January 2) investigating a case of severe paediatric COVID-19 and reminded the community to heighten vigilance against respiratory tract infection in winter. With the weather becoming cool, there has been an increasing trend in activity of SARS-CoV-2 and seasonal influenza viruses. The CHP stressed that vaccination can effectively prevent serious COVID-19 case and high-risk individuals (including pregnant women) should get vaccinated as soon as possible and receive booster dose at appropriate times. Meanwhile, the CHP also reminded high risk persons to wear a surgical mask when visiting public places, and the public should also wear a surgical mask when taking public transportation or staying at crowded places.

The case involves a 20-month-old boy with good past health. He developed fever, cough with sputum and shortness of breath on December 29, and presented with cyanosis the next day (December 30). He was brought to the Accident and Emergency Department of Prince of Wales Hospital and was admitted to the paediatric intensive care unit for treatment on the same day. His respiratory specimen tested positive for COVID-19 virus upon laboratory testing. The clinical diagnosis was croup. He is now in serious condition and is still hospitalised.

Initial enquiries by the CHP revealed that the patient had no travel history during the incubation period and had not received COVID-19 vaccine.

His home contacts are currently asymptomatic.

The CHP reminded high-risk people who have never been vaccinated or infected with COVID-19 should arrange vaccination as soon as possible and adopt additional hygiene measures to protect themselves. Parents are also reminded to arrange COVID-19 vaccination for their babies aged 6 months or above in order to reduce the risk of severe cases and fatalities. In addition, high-risk priority groups are recommended to receive a dose of COVID-19 vaccine at least six months after the last dose or infection, regardless of the number of doses received previously. For more information on the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme and the latest recommendation on the use of vaccines, please visit the CHP's website at www.chp.gov.hk/en/features/106934.html.

In order to prevent infection of COVID-19, influenza and other respiratory illnesses as well as transmission in the community, the public should maintain strict personal and environmental hygiene at all times and note the following:

- Surgical masks can prevent transmission of respiratory viruses from ill persons. It is essential for persons who are symptomatic (even if having mild symptoms) to wear a surgical mask;
- It is important to wear a mask properly, including performing hand hygiene before wearing and after removing a mask;
- Avoid touching one's eyes, mouth and nose;
- Wash hands with liquid soap and water properly whenever possibly contaminated;
- When hands are not visibly soiled, clean them with 70 to 80 per cent alcohol-based handrub;
- Cover the mouth and nose with tissue paper when sneezing or coughing. Dispose of soiled tissue paper properly into a lidded rubbish bin, and wash hands thoroughly afterwards;
- Maintain good indoor ventilation;
- When having respiratory symptoms, wear a surgical mask, refrain from work or attending classes at school, avoid going to crowded places and seek medical advice promptly; and
- Maintain a balanced diet, perform physical activity regularly, take adequate rest, do not smoke and avoid overstress.

â€‹The public may visit the [thematic website of COVID-19](#) and the CHP's [COVID-19 & Flu Express](#) for more information.

[Clusters of cases Carbapenemase-](#)

Producing Enterobacteriaceae and Influenza A cases in Kowloon Hospital

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The spokesperson for Kowloon Hospital (KH) made the following announcement today (January 2):

Three patients (aged 53 to 88) of a male medical extended care ward have been confirmed as being carriers of Carbapenemase-Producing Enterobacteriaceae (CPE) since December 23, 2023. A patient was transferred to United Christian Hospital for further medical care in isolation on December 25, and the remaining two patients are being treated in isolation at KH and in stable condition.

Eight patients (aged 35 to 89) in another male rehabilitation and medical extended care ward have presented with respiratory symptoms since December 26, 2023. Appropriate viral tests were arranged for the patients and their test results were positive to Influenza A. A patient was transferred to Kwong Wah Hospital for further medical care in isolation on December 28, and the remaining seven patients are being treated in isolation at KH and in stable condition.

Infection control measures have already been stepped up according to established guidelines. All other patients in the wards concerned are under close surveillance.

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

Cluster of Candida auris cases in Queen Elizabeth Hospital

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority.

The spokesperson for Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH) made the following announcement today (January 2):

A 59-year-old female patient in the neurosurgical ward was found to carry *Candida auris* on December 17, 2023, without signs of infection. In accordance with prevailing guidelines, QEH commenced a contact tracing investigation and found two more female patients (aged 69 and 74) carrying

Candida auris without signs of infection. All patients are being treated in isolation and are in stable condition.

The hospital has reported the cases to the Hospital Authority Head Office and the Centre for Health Protection (CHP). The following enhanced infection control measures have already been adopted:

1. Thorough cleaning and disinfection of the ward concerned;
2. Enhanced patient and environmental screening procedures; and
3. Application of stringent contact precautions and enhanced hand hygiene of staff and patients.

The hospital will continue to closely monitor the situation as well as following up the cases with departments concerned and the CHP.

Import of poultry meat and products from Gunma Prefecture in Japan suspended

The Centre for Food Safety (CFS) of the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department announced today (January 2) that in view of a notification from the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Japan about an outbreak of highly pathogenic avian influenza in Gunma Prefecture in Japan, the CFS has instructed the trade to suspend the import of poultry meat and products (including poultry eggs) from the area with immediate effect to protect public health in Hong Kong.

A CFS spokesman said that according to the Census and Statistics Department, Hong Kong imported about 1 080 tonnes of frozen poultry meat and about 200.84 million poultry eggs from Japan in the first nine months of last year.

"The CFS has contacted the Japanese authority over the issue and will closely monitor information issued by the World Organisation for Animal Health and the relevant authorities on the avian influenza outbreak. Appropriate action will be taken in response to the development of the situation," the spokesman said.