

CHP investigates imported case of measles infection

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) is today (April 3) investigating an imported case of measles infection and reminded the public that vaccination is the most effective way to prevent measles, and people born outside Hong Kong who might not have received a measles vaccination during childhood should review their vaccination history.

The case involves a 45-year-old man with good past health. He developed fever, cough, sore throat and conjunctivitis since March 24, and rash since March 26. He visited private doctors on March 24, 25 and 27 respectively, and admitted to Hong Kong Sanatorium & Hospital on March 27 for treatment. His respiratory specimen sample tested positive for the measles virus upon nucleic acid testing. He is in stable condition and has been discharged. His three household contacts are currently asymptomatic.

According to the patient, he travelled to Indonesia from March 3 to 6 during the incubation period and did not have contact with measles patients in Hong Kong. The case has been identified as an imported case. The patient had travelled to the Mainland on March 21. During the communicable period, he took a cross-boundary coach at late night of March 22 from Huanggang Control Point and arrived at Mong Kok the next day after midnight.

As measles is highly infectious and the transmission risk at crowded environment (such as transportation) is higher, the CHP has set up an enquiry hotline (2125 2372) for contact tracing of the case. The CHP appealed to the passengers of the above-mentioned cross-boundary coach with symptoms of measles to call the hotline. Officers of the CHP will assess their conditions and offer suggestions. The hotline will operate from 9am to 1pm tomorrow (April 4), and from 9am to 5.30pm starting from April 5, Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays).

Investigations are ongoing.

"The global immunisation coverage rates have dropped since the COVID-19 pandemic. Many countries worldwide are facing a resurgence of measles outbreaks. According to the World Health Organization, the number of measles cases had risen worldwide to over 300 000 cases reported in 2023, a roughly 80 per cent increase from 2022. The Western Pacific region recorded a total of about 5 000 cases in 2023, which represented more than a 2.5 times increase when compared with 2022, with persistent transmission found in the Philippines and Malaysia. In view of the continuous increase in measles cases, the World Health Organization has urged parents to bring their children to get vaccinated as early as possible to prevent measles from spreading," a spokesman for the DH said.

The CHP reiterated that vaccination is the most effective way to prevent measles. During the COVID-19 pandemic over the past three years, parents,

schools and healthcare workers in Hong Kong continued to support childhood immunisations, striving to maintain the immunisation coverage rates at a high level. As revealed by the vaccination uptake of primary school students and the findings of the territory-wide immunisation surveys regularly conducted by the DH, the two-dose measles vaccination coverage has been consistently maintained at a high level, well above 95 per cent, and the local seroprevalence rates of measles virus antibodies reflect that most of the people in Hong Kong are immune to measles. On the whole, the information available indicates that the risk of large-scale outbreak is considered to be low in Hong Kong. However, it is possible for some not fully vaccinated people to get infected and transmit the measles virus to susceptible people (including children aged below 1 who are not due for the first dose of measles vaccine).

The spokesman reminded members of the public that delays in vaccination will weaken the protection for children against measles, and parents are reminded to maintain up-to-date vaccination for their children for comprehensive and timely protection. All people who are non-immune to measles, especially foreign domestic helpers, people working or studying in tertiary institutions, and workers of sea/land/air border control points who may be at a higher risk of contacting an imported case, should receive two doses of measles-containing vaccine. In general, people can be considered as non-immune to measles if they (i) did not have the infection confirmed by laboratory test before, and (ii) had not received two doses of measles-containing vaccines in the past, or have unknown vaccination status or unknown immunity against measles. On the other hand, as measles was endemic in Hong Kong and most parts of the world before 1967, people born before 1967 are considered to have acquired immunity to measles through natural infection.

The spokesman supplemented that, members of the public who are planning to travel to places with a high incidence or outbreaks of measles should review their vaccination history and past medical history, especially people born outside Hong Kong who might not have received a measles vaccination during childhood. Those who have not received two doses of measles-containing vaccines, with unknown vaccination history or unknown immunity against measles, are urged to consult their doctor for advice on vaccinations at least two weeks before departure.

Measles is a highly infectious disease caused by the measles virus. It can be transmitted by airborne droplets or direct contact with nasal or throat secretions of infected persons, and, less commonly, by articles soiled with nose and throat secretions. A patient can pass the disease to other persons from four days before to four days after the appearance of a skin rash.

The spokesman advised, "The incubation period (the period from infection to appearance of illness) of measles ranges from seven days to 21 days. Symptoms of measles include fever, skin rash, cough, runny nose and red eyes. If symptoms arise, members of the public should wear surgical masks, stop going to work or school and avoid going to crowded places. They should also avoid contact with non-immune persons, especially persons with weakened

immunity, pregnant women and children aged below 1. Those suspected to have been infected are advised to seek medical attention as early as possible and reveal relevant contact history of measles to healthcare professionals."

Besides being vaccinated against measles, members of the public should take the following measures to prevent infection:

- Maintain good personal and environmental hygiene;
- Maintain good indoor ventilation;
- Keep hands clean and wash hands properly;
- Wash hands when they are dirtied by respiratory secretions, such as after sneezing;
- Cover the nose and mouth while sneezing or coughing and dispose of nasal and mouth discharge properly;
- Clean used toys and furniture properly; and
- Persons with measles should be kept out of school till four days from the appearance of a rash to prevent the spread of the infection to non-immune persons in school.

For more information on measles, the public may visit the CHP's [measles thematic page](#). Members of the public who are going to travel can visit the website of the DH's [Travel Health Service](#) for news of measles outbreaks outside Hong Kong.

Appointment of Town Planning Board members

The Government announced today (April 3) that the Chief Executive has appointed six official and 24 non-official members to the Town Planning Board (TPB) for a new two-year term from April 1, 2024, to March 31, 2026.

The Permanent Secretary for Development (Planning and Lands) has been reappointed as the Chairperson of the TPB. Veteran member Mr Stephen Liu Ling-hong has been appointed as the Vice-chairperson.

The Secretary for Development, Ms Bernadette Linn, said that non-official members of the TPB have a good mix of backgrounds. Their multidisciplinary expertise and wealth of experience will contribute to the work of the TPB in discharging its statutory functions under the Town Planning Ordinance (Cap. 131) (TPO).

TPB members are also appointed to serve on the TPB's two planning committees, namely the Metro Planning Committee (MPC) and the Rural and New Town Planning Committee (RNTPC). The Director of Planning has been reappointed as the Chairperson of both the MPC and the RNTPC. Ms Sandy Wong

Hang-yee and Mr Daniel Lau King-shing have been appointed as the Vice-chairperson of the MPC and the RNTPC respectively.

"We are deeply grateful to the retiring members for their contributions during their tenure. We also look forward to working closely with TPB members of the new term to further the development of Hong Kong," Ms Linn said.

The TPB is a statutory body established under section 2 of the TPO with a view to promoting the health, safety, convenience and general welfare of the community through the systematic preparation and approval of plans for the layout of areas of Hong Kong.

The full membership of the TPB for the new term, as set out below, will be published in the Gazette on April 5, 2024.

Chairperson

Permanent Secretary for Development (Planning and Lands)

Official Members

Director of Planning

Deputy Secretary for Transport and Logistics 1, or alternate representative

Director of Home Affairs, or alternate representative

Director of Environmental Protection, or alternate representative

Director of Lands, or alternate representative

Non-official Members

Mr Stephen Liu Ling-hong (Vice-chairperson)

Professor Roger Chan Chun-kwong

Ms Kelly Chan Yuen-sau*

Dr Cheng Cho-ming*

Mrs Vivian Cheung Kar-fay

Mr Stanley Choi Tak-shing

Mr Chung Kum-wah*

Mr Ho Kui-yip

Mr Ip Chung-man*

Mr Ryan Ip Man-ki*

Mr Daniel Lau King-shing

Mr Leung Ka-wing

Mr Lui Sau-shun

Dr Venus Lun Yuen-ha

Mr Ma Kam-wah

Mr Rocky Poon Lock-kee*

Professor Tang Bo-sin*

Professor Bernadette Tsui

Ms Sandy Wong Hang-yee

Mr Simon Wong Kit-lung*

Professor Jonathan Wong Woon-chung

Mr Wong Yuk-sun*

Mr Derrick Yip Siu-ming*
Mr Ricky Yu Wai-yip

*New members

[Cluster of Influenza A cases at Kwai Chung Hospital](#)

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The spokesperson for Kwai Chung Hospital made the following announcement today (April 3):

Seven patients (aged 21 to 74) in a female psychiatric ward have presented with fever and respiratory symptoms since April 2. Appropriate viral tests were arranged for the patients and their test results were positive to Influenza A. The patients concerned are being treated in isolation. All the patients are in stable condition.

Admission and visiting arrangements to the ward concerned have been suspended. Infection control measures have already been stepped up according to established guidelines. All other patients in the ward 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.

[Correctional officer stops assault on detainee](#)

A correctional officer stopped a detainee assaulting another detainee at Nei Kwu Correctional Institution today (April 3).

At 1.42pm today, a 47-year-old female detainee attacked a 33-year-old female detainee with a plastic stool inside a dayroom. The officer at the scene immediately stopped the assailant and called for reinforcement.

During the incident, the victim sustained injury to her head. After examination and treatment by the institution Medical Officer, she was

referred to a public hospital for further treatment. The assailant did not sustain any injuries.

The case has been reported to the Police for investigation.

The two detainees were detained in Nei Kwu Correctional Institution under the Immigration Ordinance in January 2024.

[Cluster of Candida auris cases in Hong Kong Buddhist Hospital](#)

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The spokesperson for Hong Kong Buddhist Hospital (HKBH) made the following announcement today (April 3):

A 76-year-old male patient in a medicine ward of HKBH was confirmed to carry *Candida auris* on March 14 without signs of infection, after being transferred to Queen Elizabeth Hospital on the same day. The patient was discharged earlier. In accordance with the prevailing guideline, HKBH has conducted contact tracing and found one more male patient, aged 69, carrying *Candida auris*. He is now treated in isolation with stable condition.

The wards concerned have adopted the following enhanced infection control measures:

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

The hospital will continue the enhanced infection control measures and closely monitor the situation of the wards. The cases have been reported to the Hospital Authority Head Office and the Centre for Health Protection for necessary follow-up.