

Transcript of remarks by SFH at media session (with video)

The Secretary for Food and Health, Professor Sophia Chan, met the media today (October 6). Following is the transcript of remarks by Professor Chan at the media session:

Reporter: You have just mentioned that there seem to be rebounding cases. Is it a sign of another outbreak? Are you worried that we may be seeing a fourth wave sooner than expected? Secondly about the bars, you said you are closely monitoring the situation. Do you think that there is a need to tighten restrictions before we see a larger outbreak or a larger cluster, and how the enforcement will be stepped up? You said there is joint enforcement action with the Police and the FEHD.

Secretary for Food and Health: Thank you for your questions. First of all, we have noticed the current situation that there were unlinked cases we found in the past one or two weeks. Further to the lowering of the number of these cases, it has not continued to decrease but instead it has increased. In the past while, if you have noticed, among the 10 local cases, seven of them have unknown source. We are closely monitoring the situation and that is why we want to maintain by and large in the coming week our social distancing measures. Obviously, we are very careful about the current situation – we do not want the fourth wave to come unnecessarily early because we have not maintained the vigilance in terms of our social distancing measures. In the past weekend, because of the fatigue, people were coming out and relaxing a little bit, which is understandable and probably inevitable, but I would like to appeal to the public to maintain vigilance and also their own personal hygiene and social distancing, because the risk of further outbreak would be increased if there are more gatherings. I think this is an important point.

As far as bars are concerned, we have recently observed that there are cases coming from bars. The Food and Environmental Hygiene Department has been working very closely with our police colleagues for joint operations. They have been checking and visiting all these different bars and catering businesses to see their compliance of the regulations. Obviously if they violate the law, then they will be charged. As far as the further relaxation of the social distancing measures is concerned, we do not think the coming week is a time that we should do that. Therefore we maintain by and large the current social distancing measures, we will continue to monitor to ensure that the situation is in order. At the same time, we would really like to appeal to the public that we should all work together to fight the virus, so that the efforts in curbing or stabilising the third wave will not be wasted.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)