

# CHP investigates outbreak of red-eye syndrome at residential care home for the elderly

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) is today (December 18) investigating an outbreak of acute infectious conjunctivitis (ACJ), commonly known as red-eye syndrome, at a residential care home for the elderly (RCHE) in Sha Tin and hence appealed to members of the public to maintain good personal and environmental hygiene against ACJ.

The outbreak involves 18 residents and two staff members (two men and 18 women) aged 48 to 103, who have presented with eye redness since November 15. All patients sought medical attention. Among them, one required hospitalisation and was discharged after treatment. All of them are in stable condition.

The conjunctival swab of one resident tested positive for adenovirus upon laboratory testing.

Officers of the CHP have conducted a site visit to the RCHE and provided health advice to the staff. The institution has been placed under medical surveillance. Investigations are ongoing.

"ACJ is a contagious condition mostly caused by bacteria and viruses. The symptoms are irritation, tearing, pain and redness of the eyes. In most cases, full recovery can be expected within one to two weeks with proper treatment," a spokesman for the CHP explained.

Transmission usually occurs through direct contact with discharges from the eyes or upper respiratory tracts of infected people, or indirectly through contaminated fingers, clothing and other articles.

To prevent ACJ, the spokesman advised members of the public to take heed of the following measures:

- \* Do not share personal items such as towels and toilet articles;
- \* Do not share eye droppers, eye medicines, eye makeup, contact lenses and other items that may come into contact with eyes;
- \* Minimise hand-to-eye contact; and
- \* Wash hands frequently and before and after contact with eyes.

When suffering from ACJ symptoms, people should:

- \* Seek early medical attention;
- \* Refrain from going to child care centres, schools or workplaces until recovery;
- \* Avoid going to swimming pools;
- \* Avoid touching or rubbing the infected eyes;
- \* Wash hands often with soap and water;

- \* Wash personal items such as bed linen, pillowcases and towels in hot water and detergent;
- \* Properly dispose of items soiled with eye or respiratory secretions;
- \* Avoid wearing eye makeup or contact lenses; and
- \* Avoid sharing common articles such as towels and glasses.

The public may call the DH's Health Education Hotline (2833 0111) or visit the CHP's website ([www.chp.gov.hk/en/content/9/24/6529.html](http://www.chp.gov.hk/en/content/9/24/6529.html)) for more relevant information on ACJ.

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## **MoS DoNER inaugurates 'Destination North East' festival in Varanasi**

The Union Minister for Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER) Dr Jitendra Singh said that 4-day North East festival beginning from today in Varanasi will offer an opportunity for the fusion of the two rich cultures of Ganga and Brahmaputra, represented by Varanasi and North East respectively.

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Author:

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## **Recommendations of GST Council Related to Law & Procedure GST Rate on Goods as Recommended by The GST Council in Its 37th Meeting**

The 37th GST Council met in Goa today under the Chairmanship of Union Finance & Corporate Affairs Minister Smt Nirmala Sitharaman . The meeting was also attended by Union Minister of State for Finance & Corporate Affairs Shri Anurag Thakur besides Chief Minister of Goa Shri Pramod Sawant, Finance Ministers of States & UTs and seniors officers of the Ministry of Finance .

The GST Council, in its meeting recommended the following Law & Procedure related changes :

Relaxation in filing of annual returns for MSMEs for FY 2017-18 and FY 2018-19 as under:

waiver of the requirement of filing FORM GSTR-9A for Composition Taxpayers

for the said tax periods; and filing of FORM GSTR-9 for those taxpayers who (are required to file the said return but) have aggregate turnover up to Rs. 2 crores made optional for the said tax periods.

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## [Reshaping stroke and breast assessment care consultation deadlines extended](#)

The Department has received a number of requests to further extend the public consultation periods on reshaping stroke and breast assessment care.

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## [Set the record straight over Boris Johnson's misleading Brexit claims, Starmer tells Barclay](#)

**Labour demands minister 'sets the record straight' over Boris Johnson's misleading Brexit claims**

Keir Starmer has written to the Brexit Secretary Steve Barclay calling on him to "set the record straight" in Parliament later today over Boris Johnson's misleading Brexit claims. The letter comes ahead of Brexit questions in the House of Commons this morning.

### **Notes to editors**

A copy of Keir Starmer's letter is below:

Rt Hon Steve Barclay MP

Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union

9 Downing Street

London, SW1A 2AG

27 June 2019

Dear Steve

The next Prime Minister will inherit the biggest political crisis this country has faced in recent history. The Government's Brexit deal has been rejected three times, the negotiations are at an impasse and there are now only four months to go until the October deadline.

If we are to break the deadlock the next Prime Minister will need to have a credible plan and be honest with the British public about the difficult choices ahead.

However, over recent days, Boris Johnson, who you are supporting in the Tory leadership contest, has made a number of misleading claims about the Withdrawal Agreement and about what can be achieved in the negotiations before October:

- **That the UK can rely on GATT 24 to deliver tariff free trade in the event of no deal.** "There will be no tariffs, there will be no quotas because what we want to do is to get a standstill in our current arrangements under GATT 24, or whatever it happens to be, until such a time as we have negotiated the

[free trade agreement]

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- **That the UK can cherry pick the Withdrawal Agreement.** “You disaggregate the elements of the otherwise defunct Withdrawal Agreement... You reserve the payment of the £39 billion... That is in the context of the Free Trade Agreement, that we’ll negotiate in the implementation period, after we’ve come out on Oct 31st”.<sup>ii</sup>
- **That there are existing technological solutions to the Northern Ireland border.** “There are abundant, abundant technical fixes that can be introduced to make sure that you don’t have to have checks at the border.”<sup>iii</sup>
- **That Parliament would support a no deal.** “I do [believe I can get no deal through Parliament] ... I think Parliament now understands.”<sup>iv</sup>
- **That we can have a standstill transition without a withdrawal agreement.** “I think that the way to come out is with a standstill between the UK and the EU so that we keep going with the existing arrangements until such time as we’ve completed our free trade agreement and we use that period to solve the questions of the Northern Irish border. I think we can do that.”<sup>v</sup>

You will know as well as I do that these claims are not based in reality.

As Secretary of State and a supporter of Boris Johnson’s campaign, you have an opportunity – and I believe a duty – to set the record straight and present an honest assessment of the difficult choices facing the next Prime Minister. I’m writing to ask that you do this at this morning’s Brexit questions in the House of Commons.

If these claims are not corrected, then I believe the next administration will repeat the mistakes of its predecessor, with false promises, empty rhetoric and unrealistic red lines.

I look forward to your reply in the Commons later today.

Yours sincerely,

**Keir Starmer QC MP**

**Shadow Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union**

[i]

BBC News, [Gatt 24: Would obscure trade rule help with no-deal Brexit?](#) 24 June 2019

[ii]

PoliticsHome, [Cabinet ministers tear into Boris Johnson's plan for no-deal Brexit](#), 23 June 2019

[iii]

BBC News, [In full: Boris Johnson interview with BBC's Laura Kuenssberg](#), 24 June 2019

[iv]

BBC News, [In full: Boris Johnson interview with BBC's Laura Kuenssberg](#), 24 June 2019

[v]

Talk Radio, [Boris Johnson – the talkRADIO interview](#), 25 June 2019