

Update on Candida auris cases in Kowloon West Cluster

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

Regarding an earlier announcement on Candida auris carrier cases, the spokesperson for Kowloon West Cluster (KWC) made the following update today (December 8):

Two more patients in the same male medical ward of Yan Chai Hospital were identified as Candida auris carriers while not having signs of infection. One of the 83-year-old patient passed away on December 3 due to his underlying illness while another 92-year-old discharged patient is a resident of residential care home for the elderly. The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) has been informed of the case for follow-up action.

Furthermore, Princess Margaret Hospital (PMH) arranged an admission screening for a 75-year-old male patient on November 27. He was confirmed to be a Candida auris carrier without signs of infection. The patient had stayed in the Medicine and Geriatric Ward of PMH and the Extended Care Ward of North Lantau Hospital (NLTH). He is now being treated under isolation in NLTH with stable condition. Having conducted contact tracing, one more 89-year-old male patient in NLTH was confirmed as Candida auris carrier while not having signs of infection. The patient is now being treated under isolation with stable condition.

In addition, under the contact tracing and regular screening, two more female patients (aged 87 and 92) in PMH were confirmed as Candida auris carriers while not having signs of infection. The two patients are now being treated under isolation, one of them is in serious condition due to her underlying illness while another patient is in stable condition.

In accordance with the prevailing guidelines, KWC will continue contact tracing for the patients. A series of enhanced infection control measures have already been adopted to prevent the spreading of Candida auris:

1. Thorough cleaning and disinfection of the wards concerned;
 2. Enhanced admission screening for patients and environmental screening procedures;
 3. Application of stringent contact precautions and enhanced hand hygiene for staff and patients;
 4. Introduction of PCR rapid test for early identification of carrier;
- and
5. Application of designated equipment for patient use to avoid cross infection.

KWC will continue to closely monitor the situation of the patients. The cases have been reported to the Hospital Authority Head Office and the CHP for necessary follow-up.