

Update on investigation into case of Legionnaires' disease in United Christian Hospital

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (June 16) reported an update on its investigation into a case of Legionnaires' disease (LD) in United Christian Hospital (UCH) announced on May 31.

The case involves a male patient, aged 86, who was admitted to UCH from May 16 to 25, and was readmitted to UCH on May 26. The patient is currently in stable condition. His respiratory specimen tested positive for *Legionella pneumophila* serogroup 1 (Lp1) upon laboratory testing.

Water samples and environmental swabs were collected from UCH on May 31 to test for legionella in a joint investigation by the CHP and the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department on the possible source of infection and to support the implementation of control measures.

Upon laboratory testing, 11 out of 17 water samples tested positive for Lp1, with levels from 0.4 to 34 colony-forming units per millilitre (cfu/ml), while one out of four environmental swabs tested positive for Lp1.

Laboratory investigations of the CHP's Public Health Laboratory Services Branch show that the patient's respiratory specimen and the positive water samples were both Lp1, and further testing on sequence type is ongoing. Investigations at this stage suggest that the case is a nosocomial infection.

The DH noted that UCH has conducted disinfection of the water systems concerned. The CHP has provided health advice against LD to hospital staff and inpatients, including those with weakened immunity who should use sterile or boiled water for drinking, teeth brushing and mouth rinsing.

Medical surveillance in the ward to which the patient was admitted has been enhanced in collaboration with UCH and no additional cases have been identified thus far. The CHP will maintain close liaison with UCH to continue its monitoring of the latest developments and epidemiological investigations.