

Update on investigation of suspected Mycobacterium abscessus infection cluster

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (November 4) reported an update on the investigations of the suspected Mycobacterium abscessus infection cluster. Currently, the suspected Mycobacterium abscessus infection cluster involved a total of 16 females.

The CHP has set up an enquiry hotline (2125 2372) for the related cases, which operates from Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays) from 9am to 5.30pm. The hotline will also operate from 9am to 1pm tomorrow (November 5) to receive enquiries. The hotline was set up on November 3 and as of 1pm today, nine calls were received. Four females, aged 25 to 32, said that they had received relevant injection services and developed compatible symptoms.

The CHP has not identified new premises involved in the cases. The CHP again appeals to persons who have patronised the premises [announced yesterday](#) and presented with relevant symptoms after receiving relevant injections, should seek medical attention and call the hotline immediately. Officers of the CHP will assess their condition and arrange for follow-up as appropriate.

Based on information obtained in a preliminary investigation, the CHP cannot rule out the possibility of illegal medical practice. Investigations are ongoing.

The DH reminded members of the public that injection procedures should only be performed by a locally registered doctor. Customers should look for his or her full name against the [list of registered doctors](#) of the Medical Council of Hong Kong as well as his or her professional qualifications and relevant experience. The DH also urged the public to observe the health advice below before receiving injections:

- Understand the procedure, potential risks and complications before receiving injections. Consult a doctor for an informed decision;
- Do not receive an injection in the case of a history of allergy to the injection, or infection or inflammation on the injection site;
- Request the full name of the doctor in writing if referred by a beauty service provider for the procedure, as well as the professional qualifications and relevant experience; and
- If symptoms develop, such as fever or feeling unwell, seek medical attention immediately.

The public may visit the DH's webpage on the [differentiation between medical procedures and beauty services](#) and the [Drug Database](#) of the Drug Office for more information.