

Update on investigation of suspected Mycobacterium abscessus infection cluster

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (November 8) provided an update on the investigation of the suspected Mycobacterium abscessus infection cluster. With the addition of one case, currently the suspected Mycobacterium abscessus infection cluster involves a total of 18 females.

The CHP has set up for the related cases an enquiry hotline (2125 2372), which operates from Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays) from 9am to 5.30pm to receive enquiries. The hotline was set up on November 3, and as of 3pm today, 18 calls were received, among which six females, aged 25 to 32, said that they had received relevant injection services and developed symptoms. They have been defined as cases of the infection cluster to receive follow-ups.

In addition, the CHP has not identified new venues where injections took place, or relevant Instagram social media accounts today. The CHP again appeals to persons who have patronised the premises [announced on November 7](#), or have arranged and received relevant injections via relevant Instagram social media accounts after which they presented with relevant symptoms, should seek medical attention and call the hotline immediately. Officers of the CHP will assess their condition and arrange for follow-ups 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.

â€‹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.