

Consolidation of test services at AsiaWorld-Expo

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The Hospital Authority (HA) has established test centres since March 20 at AsiaWorld-Expo and North Lantau Hospital (NLTH) to conduct tests for travellers entering Hong Kong with symptoms of upper respiratory symptoms for early identification of COVID-19 cases. Starting from 8pm today (April 5), the test services will be consolidated at AsiaWorld-Expo.

The HA spokesperson said, "With more public hospitals setting up triage and test centres in the Accident and Emergency Departments, including NLTH, the HA decided to consolidate the services of the two test centres upon reviewing the service model and the number of referrals."

In light of the declining number of travellers entering Hong Kong, the test centre also handles suspected cases referred by the Centre for Health Protection, such as travellers under home quarantine or close contacts of confirmed cases.

People awaiting test results will need to stay at the test centre. The transportation of specimens and laboratory tests will usually take less than 12 hours to complete.

"The test centre plays a significant triage function by largely reducing the admission of suspected cases for tests and alleviating pressure for first-tier isolation beds. As of yesterday (April 4), among the nearly 1 100 tested specimens collected by the two test centres, infection was confirmed in 70 of them. With the provision of immediate screening and test results, hospital admissions for more than 1 000 people were saved. Public hospitals will then have a larger capacity to admit confirmed cases with first-tier isolation beds," the spokesperson added.

Public hospitals daily update on COVID-19 cases

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

As at noon today (April 5), public hospitals had reported to the Department of Health the admission of 184 patients (92 male and 92 female, aged 1 month to 77) in the past 24 hours who met the reporting criteria of

COVID-19. Appropriate tests have been arranged for the patients.

There are 702 patients under isolation currently. So far, 206 patients who had COVID-19 confirmed or probable infection have been discharged upon recovery.

The Hospital Authority will maintain close contact with the Centre for Health Protection to monitor the latest developments and to inform the public and healthcare workers on the latest information in a timely manner.

[Government responds to LegCo member's gathering with people in bar](#)

In response to media enquiries concerning a gathering involving a member of the Legislative Council and some 40 persons in a bar on April 2 night, a government spokesman said the following today (April 4):

The Prevention and Control of Disease (Prohibition on Group Gathering) Regulation (Cap.599G or the Regulation) has taken effect at 0.00am on March 29. The Secretary for Food and Health, in accordance with the Regulation, has prohibited any group gathering of more than four persons in any public places during a specified period from March 29 to April 11.

According to the report, a member of the Legislative Council participated in a group gathering of some 40 persons in a bar on April 2 night. It was alleged that the bar was not in business during the time of the gathering with metal gate closing down by half and participants of the group gathering maintained social distancing during the gathering.

According to the Regulation, a public place is referred to a place that members of the public or some members of the public can access to or be permitted for access from time to time. Even for private properties, if members of the public or some members of the public are allowed access from time to time, such as food premises, bars and cinemas, such private premises would fall under the definition of public places and hence the requirements of prohibiting group gathering under the Regulation would also be applicable. Whether the group gathering in the bar concerned was conducted in a public place would therefore depend on the actual situation. If the situation at that time allowed members of the public to enter the bar premises, it might have fulfilled the definition of a public place and the requirements of prohibiting group gathering under the Regulation could also be applicable. As stipulated in the Regulation, any person who participates in or organises a prohibited group gathering; or owns, controls or operates the place of the gathering, and knowingly allows the taking place of the gathering, commits an

offence. Offenders are liable to a maximum penalty of a fine at level 4 (\$25,000) and imprisonment for six months.

The 12 exempted group gatherings are listed in the Schedule 1 to the Regulation. One exemption applies to "group gathering for performing any duty of a statutory body or an advisory body of the Government". A group gathering "necessary for the proceedings in the Legislative Council or a District Council" is another exempted group. Note however that the Legislative Council is not a statutory body or an advisory body of the Government. Legislative Councilors participating in or organising group gathering at occasions outside the council, whether or not as a function of the Legislative Council, are also not exempted by the Regulation.

Premises such as bars are high-risk venues in spreading virus. Among the 573 confirmed cases recorded between March 19 and April 1, there are 132 local infection cases (23%). Of which, 69 cases (52.3%, i.e. more than half) involved bars and similar premises, including 28 cases in which the patients had visited different bars in Central. In addition to Central, there are also cluster outbreaks involving customers and performing bands who had been to bars in Wan Chai and Tsim Sha Tsui. In light of these cases, in accordance with the Prevention and Control of Disease (Requirements and Directions) (Business and Premises) Regulation (Cap. 599F), the Secretary for Food and Health required the closure of premises including bars and pubs for a specified period on April 2, 2020.

The Government's legislative intent in prohibiting group gatherings is to reduce the risk of spreading the virus. Owing to the serious situation of COVID-19, members of the public should maintain social distancing to curb the spread of infection. Crowd gatherings are high-risk activities which pose risks to the lives and health of the participants as well as that of other people. Moreover, organisers may be liable to relevant legal responsibilities including criminal liability. The Government urges members of the public again to go out less and avoid social activities such as meal gatherings or other gatherings, and maintain an appropriate social distance with other people in order to break the chain of infection.

[Pok Oi Hospital gives response regarding a suspected hospital acquired case of COVID-19](#)

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

Pok Oi Hospital (POH) gives the following response regarding a suspected hospital acquired case of COVID-19 today (April 4):

A 93-year-old male patient with limited mobility was admitted to a Medicine and Geriatric (M&G) ward on 5/F of POH on March 10 because of stroke. He was then transferred to another M&G ward on 8/F on March 28 until he was discharged on April 1. On April 3, the patient was admitted to POH for fever and vomiting. Since he has symptoms of chest infection, he was admitted to a surveillance ward and his nasopharyngeal swab was taken and tested positive for COVID-19. The patient was transferred to Tuen Mun Hospital for isolation and treatment with serious condition.

A team of experts including the Chair of Infectious Diseases, Department of Microbiology of the Li Ka Shing Faculty of Medicine of the University of Hong Kong, Professor Yuen Kwok-yung; Chief Infection Control Officer of Hospital Authority, Dr Raymond Lai, and the experts from the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) paid a visit to POH this afternoon. Records revealed that a 33-year-old male patient who had stayed in the 5/F M&G ward with the index patient between March 17 to 18 was tested positive to COVID-19 on March 27 (Case 455). This patient who was confirmed to be infected with COVID-19 was arranged to stay outside the cubicle of the index patient during hospitalisation. The experts suspected that the virus was transmitted through indirect contact therefore environmental specimen had been collected.

Patient admission has been suspended and deep cleansing has been arranged for the two M&G wards that the patient had stayed. There are 69 male patients and 5 female patients, aged from 21 to 90-year-old have to be quarantined. POH will arrange tests on COVID-19 for them. POH will also arrange COVID-19 testing for the healthcare workers and staff who have been in touch with the index patient. There will be about 150 people according to preliminary counting. Besides, there is one community nurse of POH who have visited the patient's residence on April 2 for nursing procedure including the replacement of nasogastric tubes. The community nurse has been classified as close contact by the CHP and will be sent to quarantine camp.

POH will continue working closely with CHP on this incident.

Update on COVID-19 test centres

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

From March 20 to 9pm today (April 4), 934 and 206 people have been referred to the test centres at the AsiaWorld-Expo and North Lantau Hospital respectively for COVID-19 viral test. So far, 1045 people have negative test results for COVID-19 and have returned to their residence to continue the home quarantine.

Preliminary positive test results will be further confirmed by the Department of Health and announced as confirmed cases in due course.