

CHP investigates 17 additional cases of COVID-19

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health announced that as of 4pm today (April 4), the CHP is investigating 17 additional confirmed cases of COVID-19, taking the number of cases to 863 in Hong Kong so far (comprising 862 confirmed cases and one probable case).

The newly reported cases announced today involve nine males and eight females aged between 6 and 93. Among them, 10 had a travel history during the incubation period and seven are overseas students. The CHP's epidemiological investigations and relevant contact tracing on the confirmed cases are ongoing. For case details and contact tracing information, please see the Annex.

The CHP urged members of the public to maintain an appropriate social distance with other people as far as possible in their daily lives. In particular, they should go out less and avoid social activities such as meal gatherings or other gatherings to reduce the chance of contacting infected persons, who may not present any symptoms, and minimise the risk of outbreak clusters emerging in the community.

A spokesman for the CHP said, "In view of the proliferation of the disease and continuous increase in the number of cases reported around the world, members of the public are strongly urged to avoid all non-essential travel outside Hong Kong.

"The CHP also strongly urges the public to maintain at all times strict personal and environmental hygiene, which is key to personal protection against the infection and prevention of the spread of the disease in the community. On a personal level, members of the public should wear a surgical mask when having respiratory symptoms, taking public transport or staying in crowded places. They should also perform hand hygiene frequently, especially before touching the mouth, nose or eyes.

"As for household environmental hygiene, members of the public are advised to maintain drainage pipes properly, regularly pour water into drain outlets (U-traps) and cover all floor drain outlets when they are not in use. After using the toilet, they should put the toilet lid down before flushing to avoid spreading germs,"

The CHP will report the cases to the World Health Organization, National Health Commission, Health Commission of Guangdong Province, relevant health authorities and the Hospital Authority.

The CHP has set up hotlines (2125 1111 and 2125 1122), which operate from 8am to midnight daily, for public enquiries. As at 4pm today, a total of 81 575 calls were received.

Moreover, the Government has launched the website "COVID-19 Thematic Website" (www.coronavirus.gov.hk) for announcing the latest updates on various news on the COVID-19 infection and health advice to help the public understand the latest updates.

To prevent pneumonia and respiratory tract infection, members of the public should always maintain good personal and environmental hygiene. They are advised to:

- Wear a surgical mask when taking public transport or staying in crowded places. It is important to wear a mask properly, including hand hygiene before wearing and after removing a mask;
- Perform hand hygiene frequently, especially before touching the mouth, nose or eyes, after touching public installations such as handrails or door knobs, or when hands are contaminated by respiratory secretions after coughing or sneezing;
- Maintain drainage pipes properly and regularly (about once a week) pour about half a liter of water into each drain outlet (U-traps) to ensure environmental hygiene;
- Cover all floor drain outlets when they are not in use;
- After using the toilet, put the toilet lid down before flushing to avoid spreading germs;
- Wash hands with liquid soap and water, and rub for at least 20 seconds. Then rinse with water and dry with a disposable paper towel. If hand washing facilities are not available, or when hands are not visibly soiled, performing hand hygiene with 70 to 80 per cent alcohol-based handrub is an effective alternative;
- Cover your mouth and nose with tissue paper when sneezing or coughing. Dispose of soiled tissues into a lidded rubbish bin, then wash hands thoroughly; and
- When having respiratory symptoms, wear a surgical mask, refrain from work or attending class at school, avoid going to crowded places and seek medical advice promptly.

[Hong Kong Customs detects two suspected methamphetamine cases \(with photos\)](#)

Hong Kong Customs seized about 1.5 kilograms of suspected methamphetamine with a total estimated market value of about \$810,000 in two cases at Hong Kong International Airport and Lok Ma Chau Control Point on March 17 and 27 respectively.

In the first case, Customs officers inspected an air postal parcel that

arrived from Malaysia at Hong Kong International Airport on March 17 and seized about 1kg of suspected methamphetamine with an estimated market value of about \$540,000 concealed under coffee powder packages.

Subsequent to follow-up investigations, Customs officers arrested a 26-year-old man suspected to be connected with the case on April 2 in Ap Lei Chau. The man has been released on bail pending investigation.

In the second case, Customs officers found a Malaysian parcel on board an in-bound lorry at Lok Ma Chau Control Point on March 27. About 500 grams of suspected methamphetamine with an estimated market value of about \$270,000 was seized inside the carton box interlining of the parcel.

Follow-up investigations led to the arrest of a 38-year-old man suspected to be connected with the case on April 3 in Lai Chi Kok. The man has been charged with one count of trafficking in a dangerous drug. The case will be brought up at West Kowloon Magistrates' Courts on April 6.

Customs will maintain close contact with Hongkong Post and the logistics industries to step up action against drug trafficking through postal parcel or express courier channels.

Under the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance, trafficking in a dangerous drug is a serious offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$5 million and life imprisonment.

Members of the public may report any suspected drug trafficking activities to the Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).



[Public hospitals daily update on](#)

COVID-19 cases

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

As at noon today (April 4), public hospitals had reported to the Department of Health the admission of 166 patients (82 male and 84 female, aged 6 to 93) in the past 24 hours who met the reporting criteria of COVID-19. Appropriate tests have been arranged for the patients.

There are 724 patients under isolation currently. So far, 186 patients who had COVID-19 confirmed or probable infections 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.

Pok Oi Hospital announces patient case tests positive for COVID-19 with unknown source of infection

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The spokesperson for Pok Oi Hospital (POH) today (April 4) announced a patient case that tested positive for COVID-19 with an unknown source of infection.

The nasopharyngeal swab of a 93-year-old male patient at POH tested positive for COVID-19. His sample has been referred to the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) for further laboratory testing. The patient was admitted to a Medicine & Geriatrics (M&G) ward 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 with fever and vomiting. As he had symptoms of a chest infection, he was admitted to a surveillance ward and his nasopharyngeal swab was taken for COVID-19 testing. The patient is now in serious condition.

The patient had been staying in the hospital for most of the time during the incubation period. POH is working closely with the CHP and infectious disease experts to identify the possible source of infection.

According to the guideline of the CHP, the infectious period was set as two days before the onset of symptoms. Patient admissions have been suspended

for the M&G wards that the patient had stayed in and deep cleansing of the wards will be arranged. The hospital will conduct the medical surveillance and quarantine arrangements for staff members and patients who have had contact with the patient during the incubation period.

[FEHD urges public to defer grave sweeping plans](#)

In view of the current severe epidemic situation, a spokesman for the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) today (April 4) appealed to members of the public to defer their grave sweeping plans. Doing so can lessen crowd conditions and reduce close contact, thereby reducing the risk of spreading the COVID-19 virus through social contact.

The FEHD reminded grave sweepers to avoid group gatherings when grave sweeping, maintain an appropriate social distance with others at all times and avoid meal gatherings with relatives and friends at worship sites.

An FEHD spokesman said, "The Prevention and Control of Disease (Prohibition on Group Gathering) Regulation (Cap. 599G) came into effect on March 29. The regulation prohibits group gatherings with more than four people in public places and grave sweeping is not exempted. Therefore, members of the public have to abide by the group gathering regulation by having not more than four people together during grave sweeping unless they are living in the same household. In addition, a distance of at least 1.5 metres should be maintained between grave sweeper groups."

For members of the public visiting cemeteries and columbaria to pay respects to ancestors, the spokesman reminded that they should seek medical advice promptly and refrain from going grave sweeping if they have fever or respiratory symptoms. Grave sweepers should maintain good personal hygiene, wear surgical masks and always keep their hands clean. They are also reminded to keep flammable items (e.g. alcohol antiseptic sprays and alcohol-based hand sanitisers) away from ignition sources, incense and candles, and furnaces for the sake of safety.

The spokesman stressed, "At this critical moment when the epidemic situation remains severe, members of the public should co-operate and work together to fight the virus. They should seriously consider postponing grave sweeping activities so as to prevent and protect themselves and their family members from infection, thereby preventing the spread of the virus in the community."

The FEHD appeals to members of the public to make use of the Internet Memorial Service webpage (www.memorial.gov.hk) or the related mobile

application to pay tribute to deceased loved ones.