

# HA extends coverage of healthcare staff measles vaccination programme

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The Central Committee on Infectious Disease and Emergency Responses of the Hospital Authority (HA) today (April 8) convened an ad hoc meeting to discuss the latest situation of measles infection, together with representatives from the Centre for Health Protection (CHP). At the meeting it was decided to extend the staff measles vaccination programme to cover staff members of Accident and Emergency (A&E) Departments as well as General Out-patient Clinic triage stations.

The first phase of the staff measles vaccination programme commenced last week, with over 1 300 staff members working in high-risk departments and with inadequate immunity being vaccinated so far.

The HA Chief Manager (Infection, Emergency & Contingency), Dr Vivien Chuang, explained that due consideration has been given to the tight supply of vaccines and the infection risk assessment of staff working in different clinical settings. "The initial symptoms of measles are non-specific until the onset of rash. Infectious disease experts agreed at the meeting that the aforementioned healthcare workers have greater risk of coming into contact with measles patients during their incubation period. Vaccinating these healthcare workers helps reduce their risk of infection and further infecting other patients seeking consultation," Dr Chuang said.

Healthcare workers in these departments with inadequate immunity can make an appointment for vaccination at the Staff Clinics beginning this Wednesday (April 10).

"According to information provided by the CHP, people who were born before 1967 or have received two doses of vaccination should have adequate immunity to measles. The HA would not provide measles vaccination to these colleagues at this stage," Dr Chuang added.

Meanwhile, Dr Chuang appealed to patients of Specialist Out-patient Clinics to refrain from attending their scheduled appointments if they have fever and rash on the day. "They should call the clinics to reschedule the appointments and seek consultation in A&E Departments on possible measles infection. In addition, patients and accompanying persons should wear masks at the A&E Departments and wash their hands when leaving the hospitals."

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# Hong Kong Observatory awarded in Hong Kong ICT Awards 2019

The Hong Kong Observatory (HKO) won the Smart Business Grand Award and the Smart Business (Solution for Business and Public Sector Enterprise) Gold Award of the Hong Kong ICT Awards 2019 announced on April 4 with the nowcasting system that it developed in-house.

The nowcasting system is called SWIRLS (Short-range Warning of Intense Rainstorms in Localized Systems). Adopting computer vision and a deep learning model, the system makes use of weather observations from radars, lightning sensors and rain gauges to provide timely and effective forecasts of rainfall and lightning, which supports the HKO's operation of rainstorm forecasting and warning services. The real-time automatic nowcasts are made available through the "MyObservatory" mobile app and website. Members of the public can utilise the information to take precautionary measures ahead of severe weather to reduce damage. The rainfall nowcasts are provided to the Civil Engineering and Development Department, the Drainage Services Department and the Water Supplies Department to mitigate landslides, improve works efficiency, enhance ecology and preserve fresh water. The HKO also shares the source code of SWIRLS with other regions to promote the leading role of Hong Kong in scientific research on nowcasting techniques and applications in weather services.

The awards further recognise the work of the HKO, which received the Award of the Year in the Hong Kong ICT Awards 2009 with its LIDAR Windshear Alerting System.

The "MyFlightWx" electronic flight bag application developed by the HKO was also awarded a Certificate of Merit in the Smart Mobility (Smart Transportation) Award of the Hong Kong ICT Awards 2019. "MyFlightWx" provides pilots with weather information before take-off and during the flight using a geographical information system. Through presenting weather information graphically, the application enables pilots to access and assimilate information through the interactive interface more conveniently, thereby promoting aviation safety awareness and efficiency. The HKO is the first meteorological authority in the world to provide such services. "MyFlightWx" is pending official approval from the Civil Aviation Department before it can officially be used in flights.



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## Update on measles cases

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) is today (April 8) investigating five additional cases of measles infection.

As at 4pm today, three cases involving workers at Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA) were recorded. The first case involves a 25-year-old woman with good past health, who developed fever since April 2 and rash since April 4. She sought medical attention at the Accident and Emergency Department (AED) at Tuen Mun Hospital (TMH) on April 3 and was admitted for treatment. A laboratory test of her respiratory specimen was positive for the measles virus. She has been in a stable condition and was discharged from the hospital. She had received two doses of measles vaccination. She had travelled to Japan during the incubation period but had no travel history during the communicable period. According to the patient, she has had contact with a measles patient. The home contacts of the patient have remained asymptomatic so far and have been put under medical surveillance.

The second case involves a 23-year-old man with good past health, who developed fever and rash since April 2. He consulted a general practitioner (GP) on April 3 and then attended the AED at TMH for admission and treatment on the same day. A laboratory test of his respiratory specimen was positive for the measles virus. He has been in a stable condition and was discharged from the hospital. He had received two doses of measles vaccination. He had no travel history during the incubation period but had travelled to South Korea during the communicable period. According to the patient, he did not have contact with measles patients during the incubation period. The home contacts of the patient have remained asymptomatic so far and have been put under medical surveillance.

The third case involves a 29-year-old man with good past health, who developed fever on April 2 and rash since April 4. He consulted a GP on April 3 and attended the AED at Ruttonjee Hospital (RH) on April 4 and was admitted for treatment. A laboratory test of his respiratory specimen was positive for

the measles virus. He has been in a stable condition and was discharged from the hospital. He had received two doses of measles vaccination. He had no travel history during the incubation period or the communicable period. According to the patient, he did not have contact with measles patients during the incubation period. The home contact of the patient has remained asymptomatic so far and has been put under medical surveillance.

Meanwhile, the CHP is investigating two other cases of measles infection. The fourth case involves a 28-year-old pregnant woman with good past health, who developed rash since April 4. She attended the AED at Pok Oi Hospital (POH) on April 5 and was transferred to TMH for admission and treatment on the same day. A laboratory test of her respiratory specimen was positive for the measles virus. She has been in a stable condition and had received two doses of measles vaccination. She had no travel history during the incubation period or the communicable period. According to the patient, she did not have contact with measles patients during the incubation period. The home contact of the patient has remained asymptomatic so far and has been put under medical surveillance.

Initial investigations revealed that the patient had received regular antenatal check-ups at DH's Madam Yung Fung Shee Maternal and Child Health Centre (MCHC) during the communicable period. The DH has already stepped up infection control measures in the concerned MCHC, such as enhancing cleansing and disinfection, enhancing ventilation, reminding staff members and visitors to take proper infection controls measures like wearing masks and washing hands. Relevant epidemiological investigations and contact tracing are continuing.

The fifth case is an imported case which involves a 41-year-old man with good past health. He developed fever since April 1 and rash since April 2. He attended the AED at Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH) on April 3 and was admitted for treatment. A laboratory test of his respiratory specimen was positive for the measles virus. He has been in a stable condition. His measles vaccination history is unknown. He had travelled to the Philippines during the incubation period and the communicable period.

Upon notification of the cases, the CHP immediately commenced epidemiological investigations and conducted relevant contact tracing, including the crew member and passengers of the relevant cabin of the concerned flight. Initial investigations revealed that no contact has shown measles-related symptoms so far. Investigations are ongoing. The public places the patients visited during the communicable period are listed in the appendix.

"The incubation period (the period from infection to appearance of illness) of measles ranges from seven days to 21 days. Members of the general public who have visited the public places listed in the appendix during the period should observe if they develop relevant symptoms, such as fever, skin rash, cough, runny nose and red eyes in seven to 21 days (the medical surveillance period). If symptoms arise, they should wear surgical masks, stop going to work or school and avoid going to crowded places. They should

also avoid contact with non-immune persons, especially persons with weakened immunity, pregnant women and children aged below 1. Those suspected to have been infected are advised to seek medical attention as early as possible and reveal relevant contact history of measles to healthcare professionals," a spokesman for the DH said.

Upon confirmation of measles outbreak, the DH has implemented control measures at the airport including vaccination and blood testing services. A total of 30 persons received measles vaccination at the vaccination stations as at 6pm today, bringing the cumulative number of vaccinations given to 7977. 101 blood samples have been collected today. The DH will notify the participants individually of the serology results. A hotline (2125 1122) has been set up for public enquiries and operates from 9am to 5.45pm daily. As of 5pm today, the hotline had received a total of 2952 enquiries.

From today to Friday (April 8 to 12), the vaccination quota for the measles vaccination station at the airport remains at 500 doses daily. Vaccination to eligible airport staff will be provided to the following target groups:

- (1) Born in or after 1967, and have not received two doses of measles vaccination, and have not been infected with measles before, and with evidence of living with infants under 1-year-old or living with pregnant women; or
- (2) Have laboratory evidence of testing not positive against measles antibody (IgG).

Details of evidence are as follows:

- (a) Supporting documents for living with infants under 1-year-old: for example birth certificate, discharge summary or vaccination card of the infant
- (b) Supporting documents for living with pregnant women: for example, positive pregnancy tests or antenatal follow-up cards of the pregnant women
- (c) Supporting documents for laboratory evidence: for example blood results from the DH's measles serology test or any laboratory within the past 12 months

The venue and operation hours of the airport vaccination station are as follows:

Venue:	Multi-function Room, HKIA Tower (Level 5, Terminal 2)
Hours:	April 8 to 12 10am to 1pm 2pm to 6pm

As for the blood test service, the DH will continue with the provision

of a measles serology test service for airport staff to identify those who need the measles vaccination. From today to Friday (April 8 to 12), the DH will provide blood test service daily to around 100 airport staff who were born in or after 1967, with priority to be given to staff belonging to target group (1).

The venue and operation hours of the airport blood test station are as follows:

Venue:	South side before the Immigration Hall at Level 3 of Terminal 2 (non-restricted area)
Hours:	April 8 to 12 10am to 1pm 2pm to 6pm

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## Missing man in Wong Tai Sin located

A man who went missing in Wong Tai Sin has been located.

Lee Yat-woon, aged 74, went missing after he left his residence in Choi Wan (1) Estate on April 7 morning. His family made a report to Police on the same day.

Police located the man in Wing Ning Tsuen, Yuen Long today (April 8) afternoon. He sustained no injuries and no suspicious circumstances were detected.

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## Yuen Long Swimming Pool temporarily closed

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible and repeat it at regular intervals:

Here is an item of interest to swimmers.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (April 8) that Yuen Long Swimming Pool in Yuen Long District has been temporarily closed for cleaning and superchlorination following the discovery of a small

amount of vomit in the pool.

It will be reopened at 6.30am tomorrow.

The department appeals to swimmers to be considerate and to keep the swimming pools clean. They are advised not to swim after a full meal and should use the toilet facilities if necessary before swimming.