

Suspected case tests negative for MERS-CoV

The Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health today (January 24) reported that the suspected case of Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) pending results yesterday (January 23), upon preliminary testing, tested negative for MERS Coronavirus.

Inter-departmental Pest Control Steering Committee plans ahead for this year's work (with photos)

The inter-departmental Pest Control Steering Committee held its first meeting of this year today (January 24) to discuss how to improve the Government's overall surveillance and response mechanism and to map out the focus of pest control work and the work plan for this year. It set objectives in three areas: strengthening prevention, co-ordination and surveillance.

The Under Secretary for Food and Health, Dr Chui Tak-yi, who chaired the meeting, said, "The Steering Committee has met early this year to plan ahead for the overall deployment and formulate strategies for pest control work throughout the year with an aim to facilitate early commencement of mosquito and rodent control work in a systematic manner under the respective purviews of different bureaux and departments."

Consolidating experiences from last year, the Government is of the view that early prevention is the most effective approach to pest control. The Government will commence and strengthen targeted operations to prevent mosquito breeding before the rainy season. Once the rainy season arrives, staff will be mobilised to conduct fogging operations to eliminate adult mosquitoes. The Government will collaborate with the District Councils and local communities to avoid massive mosquito breeding after the rainy season.

Under the co-ordination of the Steering Committee, a number of departments have been allocated additional resources to enhance pest control work. The Steering Committee has also requested the departments to include standard pest control terms when entering into new cleaning service contracts to better monitor the contractors' performance and effectiveness in pest control work.

In order to facilitate implementation of effective prevention and

control measures under the purview of different departments as well as to enhance co-ordination and effectiveness, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department (FEHD) provided suggestions and guidelines on pest control work to other departments at the meeting and will continue to offer technical support.

To address rodent problems, the Government will adopt a multi-pronged approach to strengthen cleaning, rodent disinfection and enforcement. The Housing Department, together with the FEHD, is conducting a three-month anti-rodent operation in target areas in two public housing estates on a trial basis to enhance the effectiveness of anti-rodent work.

The Steering Committee agreed to increase the number of survey areas of dengue fever vectors and rodent infestation. As for surveillance on dengue fever vectors, there are currently 57 survey areas (with about 3 200 ovitraps) in the territory. Four additional survey areas (with about 150 additional ovitraps) will be put in place this year to further monitor the activity of *Aedes albopictus*. As for surveillance on rodent infestation, the number of survey areas will be increased from 41 (around 2 300 baiting points) to 50 (around 2 650 baiting points). The Government will take into account factors like residential areas, areas with previous occurrence of local dengue fever cases and places prone to rodent infestation, as well as district feedback, in deciding on the locations of the additional survey areas.

As regards application of technology for mosquito and rodent disinfection, the FEHD is proactively exploring the feasibility of applying various techniques in Hong Kong and conducting relevant tests. Progress of its work was reported to other departments during the meeting. If applicable to the local environment, the FEHD will liaise with the relevant departments to further improve the surveillance systems of mosquito and rodent infestation so as to enhance responding strategies and the effectiveness of prevention and control work.

Apart from the above, the Steering Committee noted that the species of biting midges found in Hong Kong are not disease vectors. However, relevant departments will formulate targeted measures taking into account biting midges' habits as well as seasonal and geographical features to abate nuisance caused by biting midges. Those measures will be carried out at places where biting midges are active, such as parks, to minimise breeding of biting midges.

Dr Chui said, "Pest control should start from home and the neighbourhood. Apart from the strengthened measures carried out by government departments, we encourage the District Councils and local communities to actively participate in and co-operate with the work of the Government. Members of the public should also maintain personal and environmental hygiene."

Representatives from three bureaux, 19 departments and one organisation attended today's meeting.



HA releases risk management publications

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The Hospital Authority (HA) today (January 24) published the latest quarterly issue of "HA Risk Alert" and the Annual Report on Sentinel and Serious Untoward Events as a risk management and communication initiative to further strengthen the incident reporting and sharing of lessons learnt for safety improvements in public hospitals.

The HA spokesperson said the latest issue of "HA Risk Alert" reported one case of retained instrument or material after surgery/interventional procedure, three cases of patient suicide, one case of maternal death and one case of others. Furthermore, among the 24 reported Serious Untoward Events, there were 21 medication errors and three cases of patient misidentification.

"Subsequent to incident review and analysis of root causes of these incidents, important lessons of patient safety are identified, while recommendations are made and shared in this publication to avoid similar events in future," the spokesperson said.

Similarly, the HA also released the Annual Report on Sentinel and Serious Untoward Events covering the 12 months from October 1, 2017 to September 30, 2018 after it was discussed and endorsed by the HA Board this afternoon. In this year's report 22 Sentinel Events are reported, as compared to 40 in the last reporting period.

During the year, 83 Serious Untoward Events were also reported, with 76 related to medication error and seven to patient misidentification. Serious Untoward Events are unexpected occurrences which did not cause death or permanent harm to patients but would have the potential to do so without timely intervention.

The Annual Report on Sentinel and Serious Untoward Events can be accessed by health care workers and the public at www.ha.org.hk/report/sentinel_event, while "HA Risk Alert" has been distributed to healthcare professionals in public hospitals for continuous quality improvement purposes and can be accessed by the public at www.ha.org.hk/riskalert. The next issue will be published on April 26.

Update on cluster of Influenza A cases in Kowloon Hospital

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

Regarding an earlier announcement about a cluster of patients infected with Influenza A in a male ward of the Department of Psychiatry, the spokesperson for Kowloon Hospital (KH) made the following update today (January 24):

One more male patient (aged 41) in the ward has presented with upper respiratory tract infection symptoms. Clinical tests were arranged and the test result was positive for Influenza A. The patient concerned is being treated under isolation and as in a stable condition.

Admission and visiting have been suspended in the ward concerned. Infection control measures have already been stepped up according to established guidelines. All other patients in the ward are under close surveillance.

The case has been reported to the Hospital Authority Head Office and the Centre for Health Protection for necessary follow-up.

Winners of 5th First Feature Film Initiative announced

Create Hong Kong today (January 24) announced the winners of the 5th First Feature Film Initiative (FFFI). Three new directors and their production teams will receive funding from the Film Development Fund (FDF) to implement their winning film proposals and make their first commercial feature films.

The Permanent Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development (Communications and Creative Industries), Mr Clement Leung, said at the award presentation ceremony that the FFFI aims to provide a platform for talented and enthusiastic young directors to develop and showcase their strengths. Since its launch in 2013, the FFFI has been a success in identifying talented young directors and producing a number of quality films.

Mr Leung said the FFFI has identified over 10 new directors in five editions, and some of the implemented winning projects have received various awards. This shows that the new generation of film talent is full of creativity and the development prospects of the local film industry are still promising, he said.

Mr Leung said he hoped that the FFFI would continue to fulfil its missions for grooming budding talent for the film industry and helping more young filmmakers realise their dreams. He also expressed gratitude for the continuous support from the film trade to nurture young film talent, which has gone a long way towards passing the baton to a new generation.

In her 2018 Policy Address, the Chief Executive proposed to make a one-off injection of \$1 billion into the FDF, which is close to double the total funding amount in the past decade, demonstrating that the current-term Government attaches great importance to the local film industry. Mr Leung said the Government has planned to introduce a series of new measures, should the injection be in place, in four key areas, namely nurturing talent, enhancing local production, market expansion and building the audience. He also said the Government will continue to work with the Hong Kong Film Development Council to support the film industry in Hong Kong on various fronts with a view to promoting its sustainable development.

A total of 30 production teams signed up for the 5th FFFI, with 16 teams participating in the Professional Group and 14 teams in the Higher Education Institution Group. The winning entries are as follows:

Professional Group

Film title: "A Light Never Goes Out"

Brief introduction: A story on how a widow finds the motivation to move on in the process of fulfilling the last wish of her deceased husband.

Director: Anastasia Tsang

Producer: Saville Chan

Scriptwriters: Anastasia Tsang and Tsoi So-man

Higher Education Institution Group

Film title: "Time Still Turns the Pages"

Brief introduction: A story of how a suicidal 10-year-old student faces despair over his family and society.

Director and scriptwriter: Nick Cheuk

Producer: Derek Yee

Film title: "The Dinner"

Brief introduction: A story of how three generations of a family in a Hakka walled village face the difficulties in their lives.

Director: Eric Tsang

Producer: Patricia Cheng

Scriptwriters: Eric Tsang and Yeung Leung-chuen

The winning teams of the Higher Education Institution Group and the Professional Group will receive a maximum of \$3.25 million and \$5.5 million respectively from the FDF to produce their films.

The winning teams are required to complete the whole film production and sales process, which involves planning, shooting and distribution, and provides ample opportunities for the teams to acquire practical knowledge in making a feature film along the way.