

CHP investigates case of severe paediatric influenza A infection

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (January 20) investigating a case of severe paediatric influenza A infection.

The case involves a 2-year-old boy with good past health, who has presented with fever and cough since January 19 and convulsion on January 20. He attended the Accident and Emergency Department of Tin Shui Wai Hospital on January 20 and was transferred to the paediatric intensive care unit of Tuen Mun Hospital on the same day for further management.

His nasopharyngeal swab tested positive for influenza A(H1) virus upon laboratory testing. The clinical diagnosis was influenza A infection complicated with encephalopathy. He is now in a critical condition.

Initial enquiries revealed that the patient had not received seasonal influenza vaccination for the current season and had no travel history during the incubation period. His home contacts have remained asymptomatic so far.

The CHP's investigations are ongoing.

"The latest surveillance data indicated that the local seasonal influenza activity has continued to increase in the past two weeks and may continue to rise in the period ahead. We urged the community to continue heightening their vigilance against seasonal influenza. As young children are particularly affected in this influenza season, we appealed to parents who have not yet arranged vaccination for their children in this season to do so as soon as possible to strengthen their personal protection," a spokesman for the CHP said.

"Apart from children, people aged 50 to 64 years, the elderly and those with underlying illnesses who have not yet received influenza vaccination this season are also urged to get vaccinated as early as possible to prevent seasonal influenza as it takes about two weeks for antibodies to develop in the body after vaccination. Medical advice should be sought promptly if influenza-like symptoms develop so that appropriate treatment can be initiated as early as possible to prevent potential complications. Parents and carers are reminded to render assistance in prevention, care and control for vulnerable people," the spokesman added.

Besides receiving seasonal influenza vaccination as early as possible for personal protection, the public should maintain good personal and environmental hygiene for protection against influenza and other respiratory illnesses. For more information, please visit the CHP's [influenza page](#) and weekly [Flu Express](#).

2019 Kaifong Representative Election turnout rates (as at 5.30pm)

Turnout rate for the 2019 Kaifong Representative Election for Cheung Chau Market Town which began at 8.30am today (January 20) is 36.46% (as at 5.30pm).

SHA visits polling station of 2019 Kaifong Representative Election (with photo)

The Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Lau Kong-wah, today (January 20) visited the polling station for Kaifong Representative Election for Cheung Chau Market Town on the last polling day of the 2019 Rural Ordinary Election (ROE).

The 2019 ROE is arranged as stipulated in the Rural Representative Election Ordinance and its subsidiary legislation, which is conducted by the Home Affairs Department and supervised by the Electoral Affairs Commission. The Ordinance covers two types of rural representatives to be elected in accordance with the law, namely the Village Representatives and the Kaifong Representatives. The Village Representative (including Indigenous Inhabitant Representative and Resident Representative) Election was held on two consecutive Sundays from January 6 to 13, while today is the polling day of the Kaifong Representative Election.

"I am delighted to see the Kaifong Representative Election is properly arranged. I believe today's election will be held smoothly," Mr Lau said.

Mr Lau also expressed his gratitude to all supporting parties, especially the Chairman of the Electoral Affairs Commission, Mr Justice Barnabas Fung Wah, and Commission members Professor Fanny Cheung and Mr Arthur Luk, SC. They have been working tirelessly to monitor the polling and counting of votes to ensure the election is held in accordance with the law.

There are 82 validly nominated candidates in the Kaifong Representative Election. 65 candidates from Cheung Chau Market Town contest for 39 seats, while the 17 candidates of the Kaifong representatives of Peng Chau Market Town were returned uncontested.



HA statement in response to appeals from nursing staff union

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

In response to the views expressed today (January 20) by a nursing staff union towards heavy workload in public hospitals during winter surge, the Hospital Authority (HA) spokesperson responded as follows:

There has been significant rapid increase in demand for public hospital services since the commencement of winter surge and Hong Kong entering the influenza season. HA is fully aware of the tremendous workload faced by the frontline and has committed to support the frontline by every possible means.

In 2018-19, HA has already added 574 beds according to the Annual Plan. HA has also allocated \$520 million upfront to the hospital clusters to enable their early preparation in manpower deployment and supportive measures for the opening of time-limited beds and implementation of contingent measures, in anticipation of the increase in workload.

HA has already enhanced the flexibility of application of special honorarium scheme (SHS) to a minimum of one hour duty since last December. To further encourage staff and to boost morale, HA will have a one-off 12-week arrangement to increase the rate of SHS allowance by 10 per cent from January 28.

To address the nursing manpower issue, HA will recruit 2 230 nurses this year (2018-19), resulting in a net increase of 830 nurses after accounting for the attrition. To alleviate the workload of frontline staff during the winter surge, public hospitals have recruited about 800 part-time and temporary nurses, apart from over 40 nurses recruited through the newly

established Locum Office. Hospitals will continue to recruit patient service and clerical support staff in wards to support nurses in handling patient care and clerical duties.

HA will continue to listen to the views of healthcare staff unions and frontline staff. HA would also like to express its gratitude once again to all frontline staff for their commitment and dedication in taking care of the patients.

2019 Kaifong Representative Election **turnout rates (as at 3.30pm)**

Turnout rate for the 2019 Kaifong Representative Election for Cheung Chau Market Town which began at 8.30am today (January 20) is 29.91% (as at 3.30pm).