

CHP investigates 30 additional confirmed cases of COVID-19

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health has announced that as of 4pm today (June 22), the CHP was investigating 30 additional confirmed cases of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), taking the number of cases to 1 162 in Hong Kong so far (comprising 1 161 confirmed cases and one probable case).

The newly reported cases announced today involve 15 males and 15 females aged between 1 and 61. All of them had a travel history during the incubation period. 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.

In addition, the CHP is investigating an overseas case. The case involves a 58-year-old male patient who took flight CX906 (Economy class) on Cathay Pacific from the Philippines arriving in Hong Kong yesterday (June 21). The patient was transferred directly from Hong Kong International Airport upon arrival to Queen Mary Hospital for management. The CHP has contacted the health authority in the Philippines to obtain more information about the case. According to the health authority in the Philippines, the patient had tested positive for COVID-19 on June 20 in the Philippines.

The CHP again urged members of the public to maintain an appropriate social distance with other people as far as possible in their daily lives to minimise the risk of infection. 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, "Given that the situation of COVID-19 infection remains severe and that there is a 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 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."

Moreover, the Government has launched the website "COVID-19 Thematic Website" (www.coronavirus.gov.hk) for announcing the latest updates on various news on COVID-19 infection and health advice to help the public understand the latest updates. Members of the public may also gain access to information via the COVID-19 WhatsApp Helpline launched by the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer. Simply by saving 9617 1823 in their phone contacts or clicking the link wa.me/85296171823?text=hi, they will be able to obtain information on COVID-19 as well as the "StayHomeSafe" mobile app and wristband via WhatsApp.

To prevent pneumonia and respiratory tract infections, 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 performing 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 doorknobs, 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 litre of water into each drain outlet (U-trap) 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.

Government statement on Waste Disposal

(Charging for Municipal Solid Waste) (Amendment) Bill 2018

In response to the decision of the Bills Committee on Waste Disposal (Charging for Municipal Solid Waste) (Amendment) Bill 2018 (Amendment Bill) to discontinue its scrutiny work on the Amendment Bill and report to the House Committee its decision to discontinue its work, a spokesman for the Environment Bureau today (June 22) made the following statement:

"The Government is disappointed that the Amendment Bill could not be passed in the current term of the Legislative Council (LegCo) after around 34 hours of discussion in 15 Bills Committee meetings, following the Bill Committee's decision to discontinue its scrutiny work. The Government, nonetheless, expressed gratitude to the efforts made by the Chairman of the Bills Committee and members' deliberations.

Since the introduction of the Amendment Bill into the LegCo in November 2018, the Government has all along spared no effort in facilitating the Bills Committee to scrutinise the Amendment Bill and explaining its policy on municipal solid waste (MSW) charging as well as the content of the Amendment Bill. Meanwhile, the Government has listened to the views of the LegCo Members and the public, while stepping up the work on waste reduction and recycling.

The proposed policy on MSW charging, modus operandi and arrangements under the Amendment Bill were based on the consensus fostered within the community through consultation with the public and trades for a considerable time in the past, including a bottom-up engagement process. Generally, relevant trades found it acceptable and members of public were receptive to the proposal, which would help relieve the increasingly tremendous pressure on landfills in Hong Kong and reduce carbon emissions to combat climate change.

Premised on the 'polluter-pays' principle, MSW charging is part and parcel of the waste management strategy. Having said that, it is imperative to adopt a multi-pronged approach to achieve waste reduction effectively rather than relying solely on the implementation of MSW charging. To this end, the Government will continue to enhance various waste reduction and recycling measures to develop a circular economy. Starting from the 2019-20 financial year, the Environmental Protection Department (EPD) has allocated additional recurrent resources to support these measures.

The EPD's efforts on strengthening waste reduction and recycling include optimising a community recycling network; launching a waste paper collection and recycling service; implementing pilot schemes to provide a free collection service for waste plastics from non-commercial and non-industrial sources and food waste from some of the Government and public organisations, schools and private housing estates, etc, respectively. Also included is kicking off a pilot scheme on reverse vending machines to facilitate the

implementation of the Producer Responsibility Scheme on Plastic Beverage Containers in the future; establishing the Green Outreach to provide an outreaching service and provide the community with on-site briefings and assistance in carrying out waste separation and clean recycling, and taking forward the publicity campaign on 'Reduce and Recycle 2.0' recently launched.

The social environment in Hong Kong last year has affected the operation of the Government and the LegCo alike. Apart from the Amendment Bill, other legislative proposals of the Government have been affected. Although the Amendment Bill could not be passed before the end of the current term of the LegCo, the Government's work on waste reduction and recycling will not pause. We shall continue to promote waste reduction at source and enhance community recycling with a view that the commercial and industrial sectors as well as members of the public would practise waste reduction and recycling proactively in their daily lives to achieve 'Use Less, Waste Less'. With the EPD's 'Reduce and Recycle 2.0' campaign and other relevant environmental protection measures, we shall strike jointly to relieve the pressure on landfills, reduce waste and minimise carbon emissions to support the green recovery in Hong Kong."

Transcript of remarks by SEN

Following is the transcript of remarks by the Secretary for the Environment, Mr Wong Kam-sing, on the Waste Disposal (Charging for Municipal Solid Waste) (Amendment) Bill 2018 at a media session after attending the meeting of the Legislative Council (LegCo) Panel on Environmental Affairs this afternoon (June 22):

Reporter: Secretary, will the Government be looking at how the waste levy bill can be improved so that it can get more support from lawmakers in the next term? Also, in the meantime, what is the Government going to do to make up for the fact that this bill is not here, because it was originally planned to roll out in the second half of 2019?

Secretary for the Environment: Thank you for your questions about how to move forward so that the MSW (municipal solid waste) charging bill could be better supported in future. We are focusing more on clean recycling, including food waste, paper and waste plastics. With all this support, together with other waste reduction education campaigns, we hope that more people can understand the Government's determination to support a "waste less" Hong Kong, so that in the near future, we hope we could have more support on the MSW charging bill.

Reporter: Will the bill be coming back to the LegCo the first thing after the election?

Secretary for the Environment: Similar to other bills that might not be able

to be passed within this term of the LegCo, the Government as a whole would review the situation. As I said earlier, waste reduction would be one of the major initiatives of the Government. We would try different means to let Hong Kong's waste reduction initiatives be launched and be positively pushed ahead in the future. Thank you.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)

Education Bureau holds mascot design competition under Positive Parent Campaign

The Education Bureau (EDB) issued a circular memorandum to all kindergartens and primary and secondary schools today (June 22), inviting them to encourage teachers, students and parents to participate in Mascot Design Challenges: Positive Parents – Hearts United with Children.

A spokesman for the EDB said, "The EDB has initiated the Positive Parent Campaign, with the mascot design competition being one of the key promotion activities. The competition aims to encourage participants to unleash their creativity and design an original mascot that can act as the ambassador of the Campaign to promote positive parent education as well as the proper ways and attitudes of raising children. It is also hoped to enhance a positive mindset among parents in nurturing their children, and gradually change the present culture of excessive competition among some of the parents, with a view to helping their children learn effectively and grow happily."

The spokesman said that as parents play a vital role in their children's development and learning, the EDB attaches great importance to parent education. The EDB has fully accepted the recommendations in the report submitted in April 2019 by the Task Force on Home-School Co-operation and Parent Education set up by the Education Commission and has been implementing relevant measures including the launching of the territory-wide Positive Parent Campaign to extensively promote the proper ways and attitudes of raising children.

The spokesman added that members of the public are also welcome to take part in the competition. Submission of entries will be accepted from June 29 to August 28. The competition is divided into four categories, namely kindergarten, primary, secondary and open. Participants of the kindergarten, primary and secondary groups can choose to enter the competition individually as a student or jointly as parent and student. Participants of the open group can only enter the competition on an individual basis.

The panel of adjudicators will select a champion, a first runner-up, a second runner-up, five distinguished prize winners and 10 meritorious prize winners for each category. Winners will be awarded a certificate of commendation and a gift voucher. Interested parties can visit the event website (www.parent.edu.hk/article/positiveparent) for the details of the competition and submission of entries online from June 29 onwards. The deadline for submission is August 28.

For the updates of activities and information of the Positive Parent Campaign, please visit the EDB's Smart Parent Net Website (www.parent.edu.hk).

Public hospitals daily update on COVID-19 cases

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

As at noon today (June 22), no COVID-19 confirmed patient was discharged from hospital in the past 24 hours. So far, a total of 1,078 patients with confirmed or probable infection have been discharged.

At present, there are 634 negative pressure rooms in public hospitals with 1,223 negative pressure beds activated. A total of 77 confirmed patients are currently hospitalised in nine hospitals, among which two patients are in critical condition (case numbers: 595 and 1100), and the remaining 75 patients are in stable condition.

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.