

CHP continues to follow up on COVID-19 re-positive overseas case involving cruise ship crew member

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (October 22) said that it is continuing its follow-up on a re-positive overseas case of COVID-19 involving a crew member of the cruise ship "Spectrum of the Seas" announced yesterday (October 21).

The re-positive case involves a 40-year-old male sea crew member. Results of his sample collected on October 19 on board the cruise by private laboratory tested indeterminate on October 21. The confirmatory test result conducted by the DH's Public Health Laboratory Services Branch on the same day revealed that the sample tested positive for COVID-19, with a very low viral load.

The patient has been immediately arranged for admission to hospital yesterday to carry out further treatment and test. The patient remained asymptomatic and tested negative upon admission to hospital, while his antibody test was positive. Based on the epidemiological and laboratory findings, the case is compatible with a re-positive case.

Officers of the CHP boarded the cruise ship to inspect the sanitary condition. Epidemiological investigation and contact tracing of the case will continue. Close contacts of the patient are being put under compulsory quarantine at quarantine centre. Also, the cruise ship has been included in a compulsory testing notice. Persons who had been present on the ship (including sea crew member who are not close contacts of the patient) during the period from September 30 to October 21 for more than two hours have to undergo compulsory testing. For prudence sake, the CHP has also requested the cruise to suspend its journey for 21 days. They can receive guests starting from November 11.

A spokesman for the CHP reiterated that amid the severe pandemic situation across the world, the Government strives to protect public health and at the same time foster favourable conditions for resuming cross-boundary travel with the Mainland and cross-border travel in future. To this end, the various anti-epidemic measures to prevent the importation of cases and the spreading of the virus in the community should be kept up.