

CHP investigates COVID-19 suspected re-positive overseas case involving cruise ship crew member

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (October 21) said that it is investigating a suspected re-positive overseas case of COVID-19 case involving a cruise ship crew member.

The case involves 40-year-old male who is a crew member of the cruise ship 'Spectrum of the Seas'. He had already received two doses of COVID-19 vaccination (CoronaVac) in April and May 2021. According to information provided by the Cruise Company, he tested positive for COVID-19 in Malaysia in July 2021. He arrived Hong Kong in August and tested negative for COVID-19 for more than 10 times upon arrival at Hong Kong. His sample collected on October 19 on board the cruise tested positive for COVID-19, with a very low viral load. The patient has been asymptomatic. Based on the epidemiological and laboratory findings, the case is compatible with a suspected re-positive overseas case.

The patient was on board the 'Spectrum of the Seas' scheduled to embark on a 'cruise-to-nowhere' today with about 1 200 passengers in total. About 1 000 passengers have boarded the ship today, but the patient did not have direct contact with the passengers while on board. He had also worked on the same ship in two other cruise trips within this month. As a prudent measure, the cruise trip today is cancelled and the ship will be included in a compulsory testing notice. Specified persons who had been on board the ship at specified periods need to undergo compulsory testing on or before the specified date. Close contacts of the patient will be put under compulsory quarantine.

Epidemiological investigation and contact tracing of the case will continue.