

CHP investigates four additional cases of COVID-19

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) announced that as of 8pm today (February 23), the CHP is investigating four additional cases of COVID-19 and has updated the probable case (the 66th case) announced earlier as confirmed case, taking the number of confirmed cases to 74 in Hong Kong so far.

The first confirmed case today involves a 68-year-old male passenger of Diamond Princess cruise (the 71st case), who has underlying illness. The patient stayed on the cruise from January 25 to February 20. He returned to Hong Kong by a chartered flight of the Hong Kong Government on February 20 and developed fever and cough on the same day. He was transferred from Chun Yeung Estate quarantine centre to Queen Elizabeth Hospital yesterday (February 22) and was admitted for treatment. His respiratory sample was tested positive for COVID-19 virus and is now in a stable condition. His wife, who travelled with him on the cruise, has no symptoms and is currently under quarantine.

The second case involves a 62-year-old man (the 72nd case) who lives in Choi Tin House, Hing Tin Estate in Lam Tin with good past health. He developed fever and cough on February 10 and consulted two private doctors during February 13 to 18. He sought medical attention at United Christian Hospital (UCH) on February 22 where he was admitted for treatment. His respiratory sample was tested positive for COVID-19 virus and is now in a serious condition. He had no travel history during the incubation period. His wife and son who live with him are all asymptomatic and will be arranged for quarantine. Separately, the patient has earlier provided information on his attendance of a gathering at a restaurant Wedding Banquet Specialist at Silvercord Tower, Tsim Sha Tsui on February 10. Upon verification by the CHP, the patient rectified that the date should be January 10. As this event did not fall into the incubation period of the patient, no contact tracing is required.

The third case involves an 80-year-old woman (the 73rd case) with good past health who lives alone in Chin Hing House, Hing Wah (2) Estate, Chai Wan. She developed cough and sore throat since February 8. She sought medical attention at Pamela Youde Nethersole Eastern Hospital (PYNEH) on February 22 and was admitted for treatment. Her respiratory sample was tested positive for COVID-19 virus and is now in a stable condition. The patient had no travel history during the incubation period.

The fourth case involves a 76-year-old woman (the 74th case) with underlying illness who lives in Maylun Apartments, 1-25 Shu Kuk Street, North Point. She developed muscle pain and fever since February 13. She consulted two private doctors since onset and sought medical attention at PYNEH on February 22 and was admitted for treatment. Her respiratory sample was tested

positive for COVID-19 virus and is now in a stable condition. She had no travel history during the incubation period. Her husband who lives with her is asymptomatic and will be arranged for quarantine.

The CHP's epidemiological investigations revealed that the patients of the 65th and 70th cases announced earlier and the 73th and 74th cases announced today had all visited a Buddhist temple named Fook Wai Ching She in Maylun Apartments in January and February. Those who also had visited the temple during the above period and developed relevant symptoms later, and the taxi driver who drove the patient of 74th case and her daughter from her home to PYNEH at around 3pm yesterday are urged to call the CHP hotline.

The CHP's epidemiological investigations and relevant contact tracing on the confirmed cases are ongoing. Quarantine will be arranged for close contacts while medical surveillance will be arranged for other contacts. For the progress on the contact tracing of the cases, please see annex.

A spokesman for the CHP said, "According to our preliminary epidemiological investigations, some of the confirmed cases are locally infected. The CHP strongly urged 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."

The spokesman said, "On the 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. The public should go out less and reduce social activities, and maintain appropriate social distance with other people as far as possible."

"As for household environmental hygiene, members of the public are advised to maintain drainage pipes properly and regularly pour water into drain outlets (U-traps); after using the toilet, they should put the toilet lid down before flushing to avoid spreading germs."

The CHP will report the cases to the World Health Organization, National Health Commission, Health Commission of Guangdong Province and Health Bureau of Macao.

Taking into consideration the latest situation of certain countries or regions, the spokesman reminded the public that when travelling to countries/areas with active community transmission of COVID-19 virus including provinces/cities of the Mainland, Italy (Lombardy and Veneto regions), Japan, Korea (Daegu and Gyeongbuk Province) and Singapore, they should avoid close contact with persons with fever or respiratory symptoms. If it is unavoidable to come into contact with them, put on a surgical mask and continue to do so until 14 days after returning to Hong Kong.

The CHP has set up a hotline (2125 1122) for public enquiries. The hotline operates from 8am to midnight daily. As at 4pm today, a total of 19

325 calls were received.

A dedicated webpage (www.gov.hk/ncv) has been set up by the CHP. Information including the latest local situation, list of buildings and list of flights/trains/ships relevant to the confirmed cases, countries/areas with reported cases as well as health advice and a local situation interactive map dashboard are available on the webpage to help the public grasp the latest updates.

Moreover, the Government has launched the website "COVID-19 Thematic Website" (www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/index.html) for announcing the latest updates on various news on COVID-19 infection and health advice to help the public grasp the latest updates.

To prevent pneumonia and respiratory tract infection, 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 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 door knobs; 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 liter of water into each drain outlet (U-traps) to ensure environmental hygiene;
- 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.

The public should take heed of the health advice below when travelling outside Hong Kong:

- Do not travel to Hubei Province of Mainland where there is widespread community transmission of COVID-19 virus;
- When travelling to countries/areas with active community transmission of COVID-19 virus including provinces/cities of the Mainland, Italy (Lombardy and Veneto regions), Japan, Korea (Daegu and Gyeongbuk Province) and Singapore, the public should avoid close contact with persons with fever or

respiratory symptoms. If it is unavoidable to come into contact with them, put on a surgical mask and continue to do so until 14 days after returning to Hong Kong.

- Avoid visiting hospitals. If it is necessary to visit a hospital, put on a surgical mask and observe strict personal and hand hygiene;
- Avoid touching animals (including game), poultry/birds or their droppings;
- Avoid visiting wet markets, live poultry markets or farms;
- Avoid making close contact with patients, especially those with symptoms of acute respiratory infections;
- Do not consume game meat and do not patronise food premises where game meat is served;
- Adhere to food safety and hygiene rules such as avoiding consuming raw or undercooked animal products, including milk, eggs and meat, or foods which may be contaminated by animal secretions, excretions (such as urine) or contaminated products, unless they have been properly cooked, washed or peeled;
- If feeling unwell when outside Hong Kong, especially if experiencing a fever or cough, wear a surgical mask, inform the hotel staff or tour escort and seek medical advice at once; and
- After returning to Hong Kong, consult a doctor promptly if experiencing a fever or other symptoms, take the initiative to inform the doctor of any recent travel history and any exposure to animals, and wear a surgical mask to help prevent spread of the disease.