

CHP investigates locally acquired SARS-CoV-2 virus cases with 486 cases tested positive by nucleic acid tests and 1 744 cases by RATs as well as 41 imported cases

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (January 23) announced the latest epidemic situation of COVID-19. As of 0.00am, January 23, the CHP was investigating 2 230 additional locally acquired cases that tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus, comprising 486 cases that tested positive by nucleic acid tests (171 confirmed cases, 88 asymptomatic cases and 227 cases with pending status) and 1 744 cases that tested positive by rapid antigen tests (RATs) in the past 24 hours.

Separately, 41 additional imported cases were reported, including nine cases that tested positive by nucleic acid tests (four confirmed cases and five asymptomatic cases) and 32 cases that tested positive by RATs.

Hong Kong has recorded a total of 1 212 926 and 1 647 399 cases that have tested positive by nucleic acid tests and RATs respectively for the SARS-CoV-2 virus so far.

The CHP is continuing with epidemiological investigations of the cases. Please refer to the Annex and the "COVID-19 Thematic Website" (www.coronavirus.gov.hk) for more information.

The CHP has been closely monitoring the situation of positive cases involving mutant strains by genetic analysis. The accumulative figures of cases identified by the DH's Public Health Laboratory Services Branch (PHLSB) as well as the proportion of sub-lineage and BA.4/BA.5 (including suspected cases) of the Omicron mutant strain among the specimens received by the DH's PHLSB for verification testing of local cases are listed in the Annex.

In addition, as of 0.00am, January 23, a total of 12 954 death cases that had tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus during the fifth wave (since December 31, 2021) were recorded, with 12 820 and 127 deaths reported from the Hospital Authority and public mortuaries respectively as well as seven deaths reported from private hospitals. Hong Kong has so far recorded a total of 13 167 death cases that tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus.

Furthermore, among the earlier cases by nucleic acid tests reported, there were cases (including pending cases) changed to confirmed, asymptomatic or re-positive cases. As at yesterday (January 22), the total number of confirmed cases was 531 049, while the figures for asymptomatic cases, re-positive cases and pending/unknown cases recorded since January 1, 2022, were 418 462, 31 and 262 889 respectively.

The spokesman for the CHP said that COVID-19 vaccines are highly effective in preventing severe cases and deaths from the SARS-CoV-2 virus. They can provide effective protection to those vaccinated in preventing serious complications and even death after infection. People who have yet to receive vaccination, especially senior citizens, chronic patients, children and other immunocompromised persons who face a higher chance of death after COVID-19 infection, should get vaccinated as early as possible for self-protection and to reduce the risk of falling seriously ill and death should they get infected.

The CHP appeals to the community to keep on maintaining personal hygiene and comply with relevant mask requirements in order to jointly contain the risk of virus transmission. The spokesman reminded members of the public that they can call various hotlines to make enquiries on COVID-19 (www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/index.html#hotline).