

CHP investigates six additional confirmed cases of COVID-19 and follows up on cluster in Luk Chuen House

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) has announced that as of 6pm today (June 4), the CHP was investigating six additional confirmed cases of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), taking the number of cases to 1 100 in Hong Kong so far (comprising 1 099 confirmed cases and one probable case).

The newly reported cases announced today involve six males aged between 15 and 72. Among them, one resides in Luk Chuen House, Lek Yuen Estate, Sha Tin, and the other five 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.

Meanwhile, the CHP has been proactively conducting epidemiological investigations and carrying out preventive control measures about the cluster in Luk Chuen House, Lek Yuen Estate. In view of the latest information of the cluster involving residents in Luk Chuen House, that five of the confirmed cases reside at either the "10" and "12" units, Government experts considered that the possibility that the emergence of the cases was due to pipe issues of the units concerned cannot be ruled out at this stage. The CHP thus decided to carry out prudent measures on infection controls and the DH will evacuate all asymptomatic residents of the "10" and "12" units of the whole block by issuing quarantine orders and transferring them to a quarantine centre. Symptomatic residents will be sent to the hospital for isolation. After that, relevant government departments will conduct a thorough inspection into the units.

As of 4pm today, 1 281 deep throat saliva samples had been collected in Luk Chuen House, Lek Yuen Estate, among which 26 samples need to be collected again owing to leakage, while 1 255 samples have had testing for COVID-19 completed. Except for the four confirmed cases announced on June 2 with positive results, other samples have tested negative.

The CHP is also following up with the residents in Luk Chuen House who have not yet returned their deep throat saliva samples. As of 4pm today, the CHP still cannot get in touch with six units of relevant residents. The CHP strongly appeals to them to contact the CHP personnel and return their samples to the CHP as soon as possible for early testing. The CHP will arrange compulsory testing for those who do not return their samples.

Meanwhile, as of 4pm today, the CHP had collected and tested 1 978

samples for Luen Yuet House, Kwai Luen Estate, with no positive results.

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.

In addition, as Primary 4 to Primary 6 students and Secondary 1 to Secondary 2 students will resume classes soon, the CHP will issue another letter to schools to urge them to maintain vigilance against COVID-19 at school.

A spokesman for the CHP said, "As schools are collective assembly places, infectious diseases such as COVID-19 could be easily spread among people through their daily contacts. Sources of infection could come from staff, students or visitors (especially those having symptoms). Students or staff with fever (oral temperature higher than 37.5 degrees Celsius, or ear temperature higher than 38 degrees Celsius), regardless of the presence of respiratory symptoms, should not be allowed to attend school. They should wear a mask and consult doctors promptly."

The spokesman reminded that it is of prime importance to measure and record temperature properly. Schools should actively check the body temperature of all students every day when they arrive at school so as to identify students with fever. Staff should also check their temperature before work every day. Students and staff with fever or respiratory illnesses should refrain from attending school and seek medical advice as soon as possible. These additional measures should continue until further notice by the CHP.

If a school notices an increase in fever or respiratory illnesses among students or staff, it should make a report promptly to the CHP. If a case of COVID-19 affecting a staff member or student is detected, the CHP will carry out epidemiological investigations and contact tracing, and provide advice to the school on the necessary prevention and control measures to be taken, including possible school closure.

The spokesman 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 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 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.