

CHP reminds relevant residents to comply with “restriction-testing declaration” operation on two cases tested preliminarily positive for SARS-CoV-2 virus

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (January 15) reminded members of the public that "restriction-testing declaration" (RTD) have been made for the residences of two of the cases tested preliminarily positive for SARS-CoV-2 virus the CHP is following up. The CHP strongly reminds relevant residents that they must comply with the RTD operations. Any person who fails to present an SMS notification with a test result or wear a wristband as proof of having undergone testing breaches the compulsory testing notice and may be liable to a fine of \$5,000. The person will also be issued with a compulsory testing order, requiring him/her to undergo testing within a specified time frame. Failure to comply with the compulsory testing order or the RTD is an offence and the offender may be liable to a fine of level 4 (\$25,000) and imprisonment for six months.

The first case involves a 41-year-old female patient living in Wang Sin House, Cheung Wang Estate, 9 Liu To Road, Tsing Yi. She is a cargo aircraft cabin cleaning worker working at the Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA). She has no recent travel history and last went to work on January 14. Her job requires that she conduct frequent regular testing and she last tested negative on January 11. She is asymptomatic and did a test at the HKIA on January 14 which tested preliminarily positive with a Ct value of less than 30. She received two doses of COVID-19 vaccination (CoronaVac) on June 8 and July 10, 2021 in Hong Kong.

The second case involves a 43-year-old female living in Tung Moon House, Tai Hang Tung Estate, 83 Tai Hang Tung Road, Sham Shui Po. She arrived in Hong Kong on December 20, 2021 from Pakistan by flight EK384 and her specimen collected upon arrival in the Temporary Specimen Collection Centre at HKIA tested negative. She conducted compulsory quarantine at Silka Seaview Hotel Hong Kong in Yau Ma Tei, during which her six tests conducted all tested negative. Upon completion of the compulsory quarantine, she returned to her residence in Shek Kip Mei on January 10. She underwent another test on January 14 at a community testing centre according to the requirement and the sample tested preliminarily positive, with a Ct value of larger than 20. She received two doses of COVID-19 vaccination (CoronaVac) on June 26 and August 10, 2021 in Pakistan.

The CHP is now investigating the places where the patients visited during incubation periods and will carry out whole genome sequencing analysis and compare with cases reported in Hong Kong earlier in order to ascertain the infection sources. The CHP also urges all individuals who are in doubt

about their own health condition, or individuals with exposure to infection risk, to undergo testing promptly for early identification of infected persons.

The Government has made RTDs tonight for the buildings where the patients resided (Wang Sin House, Cheung Wang Estate, 9 Liu To Road, Tsing Yi and Tung Moon House, Tai Hang Tung Estate, 83 Tai Hang Tung Road, Sham Shui Po) and persons who resided or worked at the buildings will be subject to increased compulsory testing frequency. The places where the patients had visited during the incubation periods will also be included in a compulsory testing notice. Specified persons who were present at the relevant venues at specified periods need to undergo compulsory testing on the specified date.

The spokesman for the CHP said, "The Government has remained vigilant and has been closely monitoring the latest scientific data on mutant strains as well as the epidemic situation of various places. The most stringent anti-epidemic measures will be implemented to prevent the mutant strains from spreading in the local community."

At the moment, the adverse impact on the epidemic situation caused by the newly emerged mutant strains is not fully known yet, but vaccination is still essential to prevent severe cases and deaths from COVID-19 infection. The Government has launched the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme. Members of the public are encouraged to get vaccinated. Details of the programme can be found at the designated website (www.covidvaccine.gov.hk).