

CHP reviews local HIV/AIDS situation in first quarter of 2019 (with photo)

A total of 146 additional cases of Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) infection were reported to the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) in the first quarter of 2019, bringing the cumulative total of reported HIV infections to 9 861 since 1984.

Reviewing the latest HIV/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) situation in Hong Kong at a press conference today (June 18), the Consultant (Special Preventive Programme) of the CHP, Dr Kenny Chan, said that sexual transmission remained the major mode of HIV transmission and stressed the importance of consistent and proper use of condoms in reducing the risk of contracting HIV.

"HIV is the cause of AIDS and, without treatment, about half of HIV-infected people will progress to AIDS within 10 years. On the contrary, HIV treatment prevents AIDS and significantly prolongs survival," Dr Chan remarked.

"Members of the public with a history of unsafe sex should take an HIV antibody test early. They can call the DH's AIDS Hotline (2780 2211) for a free, anonymous and confidential HIV test. HIV-positive people should seek specialist care as soon as possible," he continued.

Of the 146 HIV cases, involving 128 males and 18 females, reported in the above quarter, 71 acquired the infection via homosexual or bisexual contact and 17 via heterosexual contact, two via drug injection and two via a perinatal route. The routes of transmission of the remaining 54 cases have yet to be determined due to incomplete information upon notification.

The new cases were mainly reported by three major sources: public hospitals, clinics and laboratories (62 cases); private hospitals, clinics and laboratories (24 cases); and the DH's Social Hygiene Clinics (23 cases). Also, 73 of the HIV-infected people (50 per cent) have already received HIV specialist services at the DH or the Hospital Authority.

In addition, 22 new cases of AIDS were reported in the above quarter, of which 14 cases (64 per cent) were attributed to homosexual or bisexual contact, six cases (27 per cent) were related to heterosexual contact and one case (5 per cent) due to perinatal transmission. The route of transmission of one case (5 per cent) has yet to be determined due to incomplete information upon notification. Since 1985, a cumulative total of 2 018 confirmed AIDS cases have been reported in Hong Kong.

In the above quarter, the most common AIDS-defining illness was *Pneumocystis pneumonia*, a kind of chest infection.

The public may visit the following pages for more information on HIV/AIDS: the DH's Virtual AIDS Office (www.aids.gov.hk), the Red Ribbon Centre (www.rrc.gov.hk), the AIDS Hotline website (www.27802211.com) and the Gay Men HIV Information website (www.21171069.com).

