

Fungus found in the environment of North Lantau Hospital Hong Kong Infection Control Centre

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The spokesman for Kowloon West Cluster made the following announcement today (November 9) on North Lantau Hospital Hong Kong Infection Control Centre (HKICC):

A HKICC staff member found fungus at the bottom of a column in an isolation cubicle located on the ground floor of Block B when cleansing the area last Thursday (November 4).

Upon further inspection, similar fungus was also found in 15 cubicles of five wards on the ground floor. Since the fungus was mainly found in the wards located on the ground floor but not on the first floor, as a precautionary measure, 59 patients hospitalised on the ground floor are being transferred to unaffected wards on the first floor for ongoing treatment before end of tomorrow.

HKICC is highly concerned and immediately contacted and requested the contractor to follow up the incident. The contractor has engaged a specialist to investigate the situation. The fungus was removed and the cubicles concerned were thoroughly disinfected. The contractor will arrange replacement of the affected walling materials thoroughly.

The Hospital Authority (HA) Toxicology Reference Laboratory conducted tests on the fungus and confirmed the species as wood-decay fungus. Generally speaking, the fungus is not harmful to human health. Healthcare staff will also closely monitor the condition of the patients who are all in stable condition currently.

HKICC has reported the incident to the HA Head Office and will continue to urge the contractor to identify the cause of the incident and promptly propose mitigation measures and follow-up plans to ensure that operations of HKICC and patient safety will not be affected. The HA has also reported the incident to related government departments for their assistance in handling the incident.