

Hong Kong residents safely returned from Peru by chartered flights arranged by HKSAR Government and received testing

A Government spokesman said that 65 Hong Kong residents who took the chartered flights arranged by the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government safely arrived Hong Kong from Peru today (April 5) in the afternoon. They subsequently proceeded to the Centre for Health Protection's testing centre at the AsiaWorld-Expo for COVID-19 testing and are now awaiting the testing results. If tested negative, they can return home or proceed to a designated place to continue completion of the 14-day compulsory quarantine.

Peru declared a state of national emergency in mid-March, imposing very strict restrictions on all land and air traffic. The Immigration Department (ImmD) thereafter received a total of 98 requests for assistance from Hong Kong residents stranded there. With the full assistance of the Office of the Commissioner of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China in the HKSAR (OCMFA) and the Chinese Embassy in the Republic of Peru (Chinese Embassy in Peru), 65 of them (including an accompanying baby of a Hong Kong resident) earlier took the chartered flight arranged by the HKSAR Government from Lima to London, followed by an ordinary connecting flight to Hong Kong and arrived this afternoon.

Among the Hong Kong residents who sought assistance, one of them passed away in Peru earlier from COVID-19 infection and 13 have left there already through other arrangements. The remaining ones have not taken the chartered flights to leave Peru on personal preference or because they are subject to quarantine.

Currently at least four Hong Kong residents are required to stay in Peru for quarantine and undergo COVID-19 testing. The HKSAR Government will continue to follow up with the OCMFA and the Chinese Embassy in Peru to provide practicable and appropriate assistance to the affected Hong Kong residents.

The cost for taking the chartered flight from Lima to Hong Kong via London is around HK\$30,000; and that from Cusco to Lima is around HK\$5,600. For the sake of mutual co-operation and benefit, the HKSAR Government has accepted the requests for assistance from other governments for allowing their residents to take the remaining seats of the chartered flights. Four Malaysian residents took the chartered flight from Cusco to Lima while six Malaysian residents and three British residents took the chartered flight from Lima to London. They have arranged the following itinerary by themselves after arriving London. These nine foreign residents have to pay the same amount for taking the chartered flights.

Pok Oi Hospital gives following update regarding a suspected hospital acquired case of COVID-19

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

Pok Oi Hospital (POH) spokesperson made the following update today (April 5) regarding a suspected hospital acquired case of COVID-19 announced yesterday:

POH has arranged the specimen taking of nasopharyngeal swab for the 72 in-patients (69 males and 3 females) who have been admitted to the same medical wards with the 93-year-old male patient, who was tested positive for COVID-19. As at 9pm, 56 patient specimens were available and all of them were negative. The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) had also arranged six patients who were discharged to old Age residential care homes to re-admit to POH for COVID-19 testing. Their results were also negative. As for the four family members who lived with the index patient or regarded as close contact, they were also tested negative to COVID-19.

POH will continue to work on the contact tracing of healthcare workers and staff who have been in contact with the index patient, including doctors, nurses, allied health professionals, patient care assistants etc. Among these 200 people, 135 of them were tested negative to COVID-19. The hospital will arrange the tests for the remaining colleagues as soon as possible. Among the colleagues who have been followed-up, except the community care nurse that was mentioned yesterday, all others were not considered as close contact for the time being. However, they will be placed under medical surveillance for 28 days. Besides, the 18 environmental specimen collected from the ward such as blood pressure monitors and laundry bags, were tested negative for COVID-19.

Since admission of new patients had been suspended for the two medical wards that the index patient had stayed, the New Territories West Cluster (NTWC) has activated contingency diversion to arrange POH Accident & Emergency (A&E) patients who need admission to be diverted to Tuen Mun Hospital. The hospital will continue to work closely with CHP on the investigation of source of infection, and closely monitor the situation of all colleagues and patients concerned.

Update on COVID-19 test centres

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

From March 20 to 8pm today (April 5), 977 and 209 people have been referred to the test centres at the AsiaWorld-Expo and North Lantau Hospital respectively for COVID-19 viral test. So far, 1 095 people have negative test results for COVID-19 and have returned to their residence to continue the home quarantine.

Preliminary positive test results will be further confirmed by the Department of Health and announced as confirmed cases in due course.

CHP investigates 28 additional cases of COVID-19

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health announced that as of 4pm today (April 5), the CHP is investigating 28 additional confirmed cases of COVID-19, taking the number of cases to 891 in Hong Kong so far (comprising 890 confirmed cases and one probable case).

The newly reported cases announced today involve 17 males and 11 females aged between 16 and 64. Among them, 25 had travel history during the incubation period and 13 are overseas students. 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.

The CHP urged members of the public to maintain an appropriate social distance with other people as far as possible in their daily lives. 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.

A spokesman for the CHP said, "In view of the proliferation of the disease and 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,"

The CHP will report the cases to the World Health Organization, the National Health Commission, the Health Commission of Guangdong Province, relevant health authorities and the Hospital Authority.

The CHP has set up hotlines (2125 1111 and 2125 1122), which operate from 8am to midnight daily, for public enquiries. As at 4pm today, a total of 82 665 calls were received.

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.

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 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 door knobs, 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-traps) 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.

Consolidation of test services at AsiaWorld-Expo

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The Hospital Authority (HA) has established test centres since March 20 at AsiaWorld-Expo and North Lantau Hospital (NLTH) to conduct tests for travellers entering Hong Kong with symptoms of upper respiratory symptoms for early identification of COVID-19 cases. Starting from 8pm today (April 5), the test services will be consolidated at AsiaWorld-Expo.

The HA spokesperson said, "With more public hospitals setting up triage and test centres in the Accident and Emergency Departments, including NLTH, the HA decided to consolidate the services of the two test centres upon reviewing the service model and the number of referrals."

In light of the declining number of travellers entering Hong Kong, the test centre also handles suspected cases referred by the Centre for Health Protection, such as travellers under home quarantine or close contacts of confirmed cases.

People awaiting test results will need to stay at the test centre. The transportation of specimens and laboratory tests will usually take less than 12 hours to complete.

"The test centre plays a significant triage function by largely reducing the admission of suspected cases for tests and alleviating pressure for first-tier isolation beds. As of yesterday (April 4), among the nearly 1 100 tested specimens collected by the two test centres, infection was confirmed in 70 of them. With the provision of immediate screening and test results, hospital admissions for more than 1 000 people were saved. Public hospitals will then have a larger capacity to admit confirmed cases with first-tier isolation beds," the spokesperson added.