

## Hospital Authority “Enhanced Laboratory Surveillance Programme” supplementary information

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

Regarding the "Enhanced Laboratory Surveillance Programme", the Hospital Authority (HA) provides the following supplementary information today (March 3):

In line with the recommendations of the Scientific Committee of the Centre for Health Protection, the HA widened the "Enhanced Laboratory Surveillance Programme" from inpatient to outpatient of Accident and Emergency Departments (A&E) and General Out-patient Clinics (GOPC) aged 18 or above, presented with fever and respiratory symptoms or mild chest infection since February 19, so as to detect COVID-19 mild cases in the community and to better understand the epidemiology of the virus. Since February 28, the Programme further extended to cover patients below 18 years old and those patients with fever or respiratory symptoms subject to clinical assessment of physician in charge. Starting from tomorrow (March 4), the test will be further expanded to also cover around 10 viruses such as Influenza, Parainfluenza, Rhinovirus. The Programme is a surveillance programme, rather than diagnostic service. Similar to other surveillance programmes, this Programme is implemented in appropriate spots. Taking into account the constraints of spaces and specimen transportation logistics, the Programme currently covers 63 GOPCs and 17 A&E, whilst clinics located on outlying islands and remote areas have not been included in the Programme at this stage (as attached list).

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## Hong Kong Customs seizes suspected cocaine (with photo)

Hong Kong Customs seized about 1 170 grams of suspected cocaine with an estimated market value of about \$1.3 million from a male passenger arriving at Hong Kong International Airport on March 1.

A 24-year-old male passenger arrived in Hong Kong from Sao Paulo, Brazil via Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on that day. He was found to be suspicious upon customs clearance and was suspected to have dangerous drugs concealed inside his body cavities. He was escorted to hospital for examination and later discharged the batch of suspected cocaine. He was then arrested.

The arrested man has been charged with one count of trafficking in a dangerous drug. The case will be brought up at Kwun Tong Magistrates' Courts tomorrow (March 4).

Customs will continue to apply a risk assessment strategy to select outbound, inbound and transit passengers for clearance to intercept different kinds of drug trafficking activities.

Under the Dangerous Drugs Ordinance, trafficking in a dangerous drug is a serious offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$5 million and life imprisonment.

Members of the public may report any suspected drug trafficking activities to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account ([crimereport@customs.gov.hk](mailto:crimereport@customs.gov.hk)).



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## [EMSD announces technical investigation results on train derailment incident at Hung Hom Station on MTR East Rail Line](#)

The Electrical and Mechanical Services Department (EMSD) has completed an independent investigation into the train derailment incident at Hung Hom Station on the MTR East Rail Line on September 17, 2019, and released the technical investigation report today (March 3).

The investigation revealed that the cause of the derailment was track gauge widening. The track gauge widening was due to the deteriorated condition of the sleepers, which supported and fixed the rails in the incident location. The deterioration had reduced the strength of the sleepers such that they were unable to effectively retain the rails in the correct

position. The track gauge under the dynamic loading of trains would be even wider, and this excessive gauge widening caused the train to derail at the time of the incident.

The investigation confirmed that the incident did not involve a train equipment failure, a signalling system failure, external objects or a cyber-attack. The broken rails and rail cracks at the incident location were caused by the derailed train wheels hitting the rails, but were not the cause of the incident.

The EMSD has reviewed the investigation report submitted by the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL) on February 14 and accepted its investigation findings on the cause of incident and recommendations.

After the incident, the MTRCL has been carrying out maintenance of tracks in strict accordance with established maintenance procedures. The EMSD has also requested the MTRCL to install monitoring devices to facilitate the monitoring of rail conditions. The EMSD has instructed and confirmed that the MTRCL has reviewed the condition of sleepers along the entire East Rail Line and has completed replacement of sleepers in dissatisfactory condition. The MTRCL has also proposed improvement measures for enhancing track maintenance to prevent the recurrence of similar incidents.

The Government is very concerned about the incident. In the interest of safety, the Secretary for Transport and Housing has, pursuant to section 28 of the Mass Transit Railway Ordinance (Cap. 556), given a notice in writing to the MTRCL, requesting the MTRCL to take relevant steps, including the installation of a real-time monitoring system on passenger trains to enhance track monitoring, and the submission of report on the implementation of measures to improve the management of track maintenance, with a view to preventing a recurrence of similar incidents. The EMSD will continue to closely monitor the effectiveness of the MTRCL in implementing the relevant measures in order to ensure railway safety.

The investigation report has been uploaded on the EMSD's website ([www.emsd.gov.hk/filemanager/en/content\\_1394/ERL\\_Derailment\\_Incident\\_Report\\_\(Eng\).pdf](http://www.emsd.gov.hk/filemanager/en/content_1394/ERL_Derailment_Incident_Report_(Eng).pdf)).

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## **Kowloon West Cluster announces case of Candida auris**

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The spokesperson for Kowloon West Cluster (KWC) made the following announcement today (March 3):

A 55-year-old male patient had been admitted to the Medical and Geriatrics ward and Rehabilitation ward of Princess Margaret Hospital since late January. He was transferred to the Caritas Medical Centre for palliative care on February 24 and went through an admission screening. The screening result showed that he was a *Candida auris* carrier while not having signs of infection. In accordance with prevailing guidelines, contact tracing was commenced for patients who have close contact with the index patient, and identified one more 57-year-old male patient, who had been in the same rehabilitation ward, to be a *Candida auris* carrier without signs of infection. The patients are now being treated under isolation and both are clinically stable.

KWC has reported the cases to the Hospital Authority Head Office and the Centre for Health Protection (CHP). The following enhanced infection control measures have already been adopted:

1. Thorough cleaning and disinfection of the wards concerned
2. Enhanced patient and environmental screening procedures
3. Applied stringent contact precautions and enhanced hand hygiene of staff and patients

KWC will continue to closely monitor the situation of the patients as well as following up on the cases with concerned departments and the CHP.

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## **Public hospitals daily update on COVID-19 cases**

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

As at noon today (March 3), public hospitals had reported to the Department of Health the admission of 47 patients (21 male and 26 female, aged two months to 88 years) in the past 24 hours who met the reporting criteria of COVID-19. Appropriate tests have been arranged for the patients.

There are 123 patients under isolation currently. So far, 37 patients with the COVID-19 infection have been discharged upon recovery.

The Hospital Authority will maintain close contact with the Centre for Health Protection to monitor the latest developments and to inform the public and healthcare workers on the latest information in a timely manner.