

## CHP investigates seven additional cases of COVID-19

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) announced that as of 8pm today (February 24), the CHP is investigating seven additional cases of COVID-19, taking the number of confirmed cases to 81 in Hong Kong so far.

The first case was detected via the "Enhanced Laboratory Surveillance Programme" which was expanded from February 19 to cover the patients attending the General Out-patient Clinics as well as Accident and Emergency Departments, involving a 35-year-old man (the 75th case) with good past health who lives in Block 3, Grand YOHO, Yuen Long. He developed fever and cough since February 19. He sought medical attention at the Accident and Emergency Department at Pok Oi Hospital (POH) on February 21. His deep throat saliva specimen was tested positive for COVID-19 virus on February 22 and was arranged and admitted to Tuen Mun Hospital (TMH) for treatment. He is now in a stable condition. The patient had been to his home in Futian, Shenzhen between February 3 and 7. His home contacts include wife, daughter and his sister-in-law from Shenzhen. His wife who presented with symptoms was transferred to TMH for isolation and treatment while his daughter and sister-in-law are asymptomatic and will be arranged for quarantine. Taxi drivers who drove the patient from his home to POH at around 7pm on February 21 and from POH to his home at around 9pm on the same night are urged to call the CHP hotline.

The second case involves a 57-year-old woman (the 76th case) who lives in Phase 1 of Redhill Peninsula in Tai Tam with good past health. She developed sore throat since February 8 and fever on February 10. She sought medical advice at the Outpatient Department (OPD) at the Hong Kong Sanatorium and Hospital (HKSH) between February 12 and 16 and was admitted to HKSH for treatment on February 16 and 17. She sought medical advice at OPD at the HKSH on February 23 again and was referred and admitted to Ruttonjee Hospital for treatment. Her respiratory sample was tested positive for COVID-19 virus and is now in a stable condition. She had travelled to Osaka in Japan (January 26 to 30) during the incubation period and returned to Hong Kong on January 31. Her husband, second and third sons, and her maid who live with her are all asymptomatic and will be arranged for quarantine.

The third case involves a 68-year-old woman (the 77th case) with good past health who lives in Majestic Apartments, 301-319 King's Road, North Point. She developed cough since February 19. She sought medical advice from a private doctor yesterday and called the CHP hotline subsequently. She was arranged to be taken to Queen Mary Hospital (QMH) by ambulance and was admitted for treatment. Her respiratory sample was tested positive for COVID-19 virus and is now in a stable condition. The patient had no travel history during the incubation period. Her husband and domestic helper who live with her are asymptomatic and will be arranged for quarantine.

The CHP's epidemiological investigations revealed that the 76th and 77th cases announced today together with the patients of the 65th, 70th, 73rd and 74th cases announced earlier (6 patients in total) had all visited a Buddhist temple named Fook Wai Ching She in Maylun Apartments in January or February. Those who also had visited the temple during the above period and developed relevant symptoms later, are urged to call the CHP hotline.

The fourth to seventh cases (the 78th to 81st cases) involve four passengers of Diamond Princess cruise, namely a 59-year-old woman, a 58-year-old woman, a 57-year-old man and a 57-year-old woman. All with good past health, the four patients stayed on the cruise from January 25 to February 21, and returned to Hong Kong by a chartered flight arranged by the Hong Kong Government on February 22. Their samples were preliminary tested positive for COVID-19 virus, hence they were arranged for admission and treatment at the QMH yesterday. Their respiratory samples were tested positive for COVID-19 virus by further testing today. They are now in a stable condition. The patient of the 78th case developed fever and headache today. Her sister and niece, who travelled with her on the cruise, have no symptoms and are currently under quarantine. The patient of the 79th case developed throat discomfort since February 4. Her husband, who travelled with her on the cruise, has no symptoms and is currently under quarantine. One of the five travel collaterals of the patient of the 80th case presented with symptoms and was transferred to United Christian Hospital for treatment yesterday. His other travel collaterals are asymptomatic and are currently under quarantine. Three travel collaterals of the patient of the 81st have no symptoms and are currently under quarantine.

Besides, the CHP appeals to taxi drivers who drove the patient of the 72nd case from his home at Choi Tin House, Hing Tin Estate in Lam Tin to Kwong Tin Shopping Centre in Lam Tin and the same way back at around 2-3pm on February 18 and February 20 to call the CHP hotline.

The CHP's epidemiological investigations and relevant contact tracing on the confirmed cases are ongoing. Quarantine will be arranged for close contacts while medical surveillance will be arranged for other contacts. For the progress on the contact tracing of the cases, please see annex.

A spokesman for the CHP said, "According to our preliminary epidemiological investigations, some of the confirmed cases are locally infected. The CHP strongly urged 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."

The spokesman said, "On the 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. The public should go out less and reduce social activities, and maintain appropriate social distance with other people as far as possible."

"As for household environmental hygiene, members of the public are advised to maintain drainage pipes properly and regularly pour water into drain outlets (U-traps); 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, National Health Commission, Health Commission of Guangdong Province and Health Bureau of Macao.

The CHP has set up a hotline (2125 1122) for public enquiries. The hotline operates from 8am to midnight daily. As at 4pm today, a total of 19 861 calls were received.

Moreover, the Government has launched the website "COVID-19 Thematic Website" ([www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/index.html](http://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/index.html)) for announcing the latest updates on various news on COVID-19 infection and health advice to help the public grasp 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 liter of water into each drain outlet (U-traps) to ensure environmental hygiene;
- 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.

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## Opening remarks by SCMA on Hong Kong people in Hubei

The Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs, Mr Patrick Nip; the Secretary for Security, Mr John Lee; and the Secretary for Food and Health, Prof Sophia Chan, met the media today (February 24). Following is a translation of the opening remarks made by Mr Nip:

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government attaches great importance to the situation of the Hong Kong people in Hubei Province and fully understands their wish to return to Hong Kong as soon as possible. Over the past period of time, the HKSAR Government has been actively discussing with the relevant government departments and public health experts to draw up a feasible and safe plan to bring back the Hong Kong people currently stranded in Hubei Province, which will at the same time cause minimal public health risk in Hong Kong. We have also liaised with the relevant Mainland authorities with the aim to bring back, in batches and as soon as possible, Hong Kong people stranded in Hubei, especially groups of special needs.

The HKSAR Government announces that chartered flights will be arranged to bring back Hong Kong people stranded in Hubei in batches. This is a joint operation by the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau, the Security Bureau, the Food and Health Bureau and relevant departments such as the Immigration Department, the Department of Health and the Hospital Authority. The Director of Immigration will also take part in the operation. We need to discuss and finalise the detailed arrangements with the Hubei Provincial Government before the operation could be implemented.

Basically, the first batch of chartered flights will assist Hong Kong residents stranded in Wuhan to return home. Accordingly to the information available to us, about 450 Hong Kong people seeking assistance are in Wuhan. Some Hong Kong people in other parts of Hubei Province may have some more urgent needs, such as pregnant women, those who suffer from serious illness and are urgently in need of surgery or other medical treatments in Hong Kong, or secondary school graduates who need to sit for the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination in Hong Kong. The HKSAR Government will discuss with the Hubei Provincial Government and relevant local departments with an aim to arranging them to take the first batch of chartered flights to Hong Kong. We will also seek medical advice on whether they are fit for travel.

As for Hong Kong residents who are in other cities in Hubei, we will make arrangements in stages to bring them back to Hong Kong. Details of the operation have to be further discussed with the Hubei Provincial Government.

All Hong Kong people who take the chartered flights must be HKID card holders. In order to reduce the risk of cross-infection during the journey, Hong Kong residents who develop fever, respiratory tract symptoms or other signs of infectious diseases will not be suitable to board the flight. Those who suffer from chronic illnesses should also assess their health conditions and decide whether they are fit for travel. Health screening will be conducted for each passenger before boarding. Those who develop fever, abnormal vital signs, respiratory tract symptoms or other signs of infectious diseases will not be allowed to board the plane.

Taking into consideration the potential risk on public health, the people concerned will be arranged to stay in quarantine centres for 14 days upon their arrival in Hong Kong.

The HKSAR Government is actively communicating with the Hubei Provincial Government and the relevant local government departments with a view to bringing back the Hong Kong people stranded in Hubei in batches and in an orderly manner. Over the past weeks, we have received more than 2 700 people requesting for assistance or filing their cases. I would like to remind Hong Kong people who are currently in different parts of Hubei (including Wuhan) and who have contacted the Economic and Trade Office in Wuhan (Wuhan ETO) or the 1868 hotline that there is no need to call the (Wuhan ETO) or the 1868 hotline, or to send emails to enquire about the relevant arrangements. The Government will strive to finalise the detailed arrangements of the operation with the Hubei Provincial Government as soon as possible and will make further announcements when available.

Last but not least, we would like to extend our deepest gratitude to the care and concern expressed by the Central Government and the assistance rendered by the Hubei Provincial Government. I would also like to express my gratitude to our Wuhan ETO colleagues for their commitment to work and for trying their very best in rendering suitable and practicable assistance to Hong Kong residents stranded in Hubei, including attending to their medical needs. Wuhan ETO will continue to strengthen communication with Hong Kong residents in Hubei, including groups of Hong Kong people with special needs, to provide them with practicable assistance and support.

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## [Hong Kong Customs detects two passenger drug trafficking cases at airport in a row \(with photos\)](#)

â€‹Hong Kong Customs yesterday (February 23) detected two passenger drug trafficking cases at Hong Kong International Airport and seized about 16.3 kilograms of suspected ketamine and about 5.8 kilograms of suspected cocaine

with an estimated market value of about \$15 million in total.

A 27-year-old male passenger and a 22-year-old female passenger arrived in Hong Kong on the same flight from Paris, France yesterday. During customs clearance, about 16.3 kilograms of suspected ketamine in total were found concealed inside the false compartments of their check-in suitcases. The two passengers were then arrested.

Also, a 72-year-old male passenger arrived in Hong Kong from Athens, Greece via Doha, Qatar yesterday. During customs clearance, about 5.8 kilograms of suspected cocaine were found concealed inside five packages of chocolate and three cans in his check-in luggage. He was then arrested.

The two arrestees involved in the case of trafficking in suspected ketamine have been jointly charged with one count of trafficking in a dangerous drug. The case will be brought up at Eastern Magistrates' Courts on February 26. Investigation of the case of trafficking in suspected cocaine is still ongoing.

Customs will continue to apply a risk assessment approach and focus on selecting passengers from high-risk regions for clearance to combat transnational 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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**[Cluster of scabies infection cases at](#)**



# **TWGHs Wong Tai Sin Hospital**

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The spokesperson for Tung Wah Group of Hospitals (TWGHs) Wong Tai Sin Hospital made the following announcement today (February 24):

Two male patients and two female patients (aged 46 to 87) in a mixed gender infirmary and convalescence ward have presented with symptoms of skin infection since January 16. The patients were diagnosed as having scabies infestation. The patients are being treated under isolation with stable condition.

Infection control measures have already been stepped up according to established guidelines. All other patients in the concerned ward are under close surveillance. Under the activation of the Emergency Response Level, visiting arrangement will continue to be suspended.

The cases have been reported to the Hospital Authority Head Office and the Centre for Health Protection for necessary follow up.

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## **Appeal for information on missing woman in Sheung Shui (with photo)**

Police today (February 24) appealed to the public for information on a woman who went missing in Sheung Shui.

Chu Ying-fung, aged 70, went missing after she left her residence in Tin Ping Estate on February 19 night. Her family made a report to Police on February 22.

She is about 1.55 metres tall, 60 kilograms in weight and of medium build. She has a round face with yellow complexion and short curly brown hair.

Anyone who knows the whereabouts of the missing girl or may have seen her is urged to contact the Regional Missing Person Unit of New Territories South on 3661 1176 or 9320 5612, or email to [rmpu-nts-2@police.gov.hk](mailto:rmpu-nts-2@police.gov.hk), or contact any police station.

