

DH's health advice for persons who visited Hubei Province in past 14 days

Following the announcement by the Government on imposing immigration restrictions on Hubei Province residents and persons who have visited Hubei Province in past 14 days on January 26, the Department of Health (DH) today (January 28) gave additional health advice to Hong Kong residents as follows:

Currently, Hong Kong residents who have visited Hubei Province in the past 14 days should approach staff of DH's Port Health Division for relevant assessment upon their arrivals. If members of the public are found to be asymptomatic, they will be required to wear a surgical mask immediately and self isolate for 14 days as far as possible. They will also be placed under medical surveillance by the DH. For Hong Kong residents returning from other parts of the Mainland, they are advised to stay home for 14 days upon their return as far as possible. Those who need to go out should wear a surgical mask.

For Hong Kong residents and travellers who had been to Hubei Province in the past 14 days but had returned to or entered Hong Kong earlier, they should call the Centre for Health Protection of the DH hotline (2125 1122) for health advice. The hotline operates from 8am to 9pm daily.

Arrangements for services subsidised by SWD after the Chinese New Year holidays

Attention duty announcers, radio and TV stations:

Please broadcast the following special announcement immediately, and repeat it at frequent intervals:

"In response to the latest development of novel coronavirus infection, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government announced on January 25 that the response level under the "Preparedness and Response Plan for Novel Infectious Disease of Public Health Significance" has been raised to Emergency Response Level. To minimise the risk of infection for service users, especially those physically weak or susceptible to infection, the Social Welfare Department (SWD) today (January 27) announced the following arrangements for the welfare services subsidised by the SWD after the Chinese New Year holidays until February 17:

(1) All aided child care centres, day care centres for the elderly, sheltered workshops, integrated vocational rehabilitation services centres and day activity centres will suspend their service delivery. These centres will, however, remain open to serve those in need. Members of the public who have the need for the services mentioned may contact the service units concerned in advance.

(2) Other services subsidised by the SWD, such as integrated family service centres, integrated children and youth services centres, district elderly community centres, neighbourhood elderly centres, district support centres for persons with disabilities and integrated community centres for mental wellness, etc., will only provide limited services, except for the counselling service necessitated through client facing encounters, with a view to reducing the risk of contact and infection for a large number of service users. The SWD will also ask the service units providing these subsidised services to make clear to service users the scope of their limited services (e.g. not including groups and programmes).

All subsidised service units will continue to take note of the guidelines issued by the Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health in respect of the development of novel coronavirus infection. They will step up measures to prevent communicable diseases, including keeping the premises clean, requesting service users and staff to wash hands with alcohol hand rub and to wear surgical face masks, as well as enhancing body temperature screening measures."

Hospital Authority urge patients to provide precise information

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The Hospital Authority (HA) today (January 27) appeals to patients to provide precise and comprehensive information to healthcare workers to facilitate effective diagnosis. Patients should also cooperate with healthcare workers who will provide appropriate treatment to the patients and prevent the spread of novel coronavirus or other infectious diseases.

The HA spokesperson said that some patients or their family members did not provide full or correct important information required such as symptoms, medical history, contact information and travel history etc. in details in recent occasions. Some even refused to cooperate with healthcare workers.

"Such information is essential for healthcare workers to diagnose possible novel coronavirus infection, arrange isolation, test and appropriate treatment for the patients. Besides, there were also patients refusing

isolation arrangement and left the hospital, and such might spread the infectious disease and pose public health hazards to the community. Patients who withhold information or refuse to cooperate will not only affect their own health, but also increase the infection risks of healthcare workers and the public."

The HA condemns the behaviour of withholding important information and appeals to patients to cooperate with and follow the instructions of healthcare workers for their own well-being and public interests.

The HA Central Command Committee held another meeting today and discussed strategies and measures to better support its healthcare workers in managing the disease. The following measures will be implemented to relieve their pressure:

1. Alongside continuous effort in availing staff quarters in various hospitals and identifying temporary accommodation for them, the HA will arrange special rental allowance for healthcare workers who need to rent hotel rooms or temporary accommodation, as an interim measure;
2. The HA will enhance communication with staff and address their concerns towards manpower deployment for managing novel coronavirus patients, stockpile of personal protective equipment and the arrangement in reducing non-emergency services; and
3. The HA will minimise non-essential meetings and streamline internal administrative procedures to allow healthcare workers to focus on clinical services.

The HA spokesperson reminds the public to wash hands frequently and to wear masks when going out to safeguard their own health. Members of the public who feel unwell should seek early consultation and provide all relevant information to healthcare workers.

Public hospital daily update on Wuhan-related cases

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

As at noon today (January 27), public hospitals had reported to the Department of Health (DH) the admission of 69 patients (33 male and 36 female, newborn baby to aged 83) in the past 24 hours who met the reporting criteria of severe respiratory disease associated with a novel infectious agent. Specimens of the patients concerned have been sent to the DH for testing. Among the 110 patients under isolation, 104 are in stable condition. One female patient in Pamela Youde Nethersole Eastern Hospital is in critical condition, three neonatal babies in Pamela Youde Nethersole

Eastern Hospital, one male patient in North District Hospital and one female patient in Tuen Mun Hospital are in serious condition due to their underlying diseases. One reported case in North District Hospital succumbed due to his underlying diseases.

The HA 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.

CHP announces latest situations on imported cases of novel coronavirus infection

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) is today (January 27) continuing its investigations on the eight imported cases of novel coronavirus infection. The public is again urged to maintain strict personal, food and environmental hygiene both locally and during travel.

The CHP is continuing its epidemiological investigations and relevant contact tracing of the eight confirmed imported cases in Hong Kong. For the progress on the contact tracing of the cases, please see annex.

Quarantine will be arranged for close contacts while medical surveillance will be arranged for other contacts. The Lady MacLehose Holiday Village under the Leisure and Cultural Services Department has been converted as quarantine centre and close contacts would be transferred to the village for quarantine.

The CHP has set up a hotline (2125 1122) for the cases, which operates from 8am to 9pm daily to answer public enquiries. As at 4pm today, a total of 637 calls were received.

A dedicated webpage (www.chp.gov.hk/en/features/102465.html) has been set up by the CHP to provide relevant information and health advice on Severe Respiratory Disease associated with a Novel Infectious Agent. Information of the latest notifications received from the Mainland and overseas will be updated to the CHP website (www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/statistics_of_the_cases_novel_coronavirus_infection_en.pdf) daily at 9am and 6pm to help the public grasp information on the affected countries/areas.

A spokesman for the CHP said, "The CHP will continue to maintain its liaison with the National Health Commission, the World Health Organization

and the relevant health authorities, and closely monitor the situation for risk assessment."

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;
- 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.

The public should take heed of the health advice below when travelling outside Hong Kong:

- Do not travel to Hubei Province where community transmission of novel coronavirus is occurring. If it is unavoidable to travel to such places, put on a surgical mask and continue to do so until 14 days after returning to Hong Kong;
- Avoid close contact with persons with fever or respiratory symptoms in countries/areas with possible community transmission of novel coronavirus infection. If it is unavoidable to come into contact with them, put on a surgical mask and continue to do so until 14 days after returning to Hong Kong;
- Avoid visiting hospitals. If it is necessary to visit a hospital, put on a surgical mask and observe strict personal and hand hygiene;
- Avoid touching animals (including game), poultry/birds or their droppings;
- Avoid visiting wet markets, live poultry markets or farms;
- Avoid making close contact with patients, especially those with symptoms of acute respiratory infections;
- Do not consume game meat and do not patronise food premises where game meat is served;
- Adhere to food safety and hygiene rules such as avoiding consuming raw or undercooked animal products, including milk, eggs and meat, or foods which

may be contaminated by animal secretions, excretions (such as urine) or contaminated products, unless they have been properly cooked, washed or peeled;

- If feeling unwell when outside Hong Kong, especially if experiencing a fever or cough, wear a surgical mask, inform the hotel staff or tour escort and seek medical advice at once; and
- After returning to Hong Kong, consult a doctor promptly if experiencing a fever or other symptoms, take the initiative to inform the doctor of any recent travel history and any exposure to animals, and wear a surgical mask to help prevent spread of the disease.