

## Suspected MERS case reported

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (January 4) reported a suspected case of Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS), and again urged the public to pay special attention to safety during travel, taking due consideration of the health risks in the places they visit. The case is detailed below:

Sex	Male
Age	45
Affected area involved	Lebanon
High-risk exposure	Nil
Hospital	Ruttonjee Hospital
Condition	Stable
MERS-Coronavirus preliminary test result	Pending

Separately, the CHP today reported that the suspected MERS cases pending results yesterday (January 3), upon preliminary testing, tested negative for MERS Coronavirus.

"Travellers to the Middle East should avoid going to farms, barns or markets with camels; avoid contact with sick persons and animals, especially camels, birds or poultry; and avoid unnecessary visits to healthcare facilities. We strongly advise travel agents organising tours to the Middle East to abstain from arranging camel rides and activities involving direct contact with camels, which are known risk factors for acquiring MERS Coronavirus (MERS-CoV)," a spokesman for the CHP said.

Locally, the CHP's surveillance with public and private hospitals, with practising doctors and at boundary control points is firmly in place. Inbound travellers and members of the public who recently visited the Middle East and developed relevant symptoms within 14 days will be classified as suspected MERS cases. They will be taken to public hospitals for isolation and management until their specimens test negative for MERS-CoV.

Travellers to affected areas should maintain vigilance, adopt appropriate health precautions and take heed of personal, food and environmental hygiene. The public may visit the MERS pages of the [CHP](#) and its [Travel Health Service](#), MERS statistics in [affected areas](#), the CHP's [Facebook Page](#) and [YouTube Channel](#), and the World Health Organization's [latest news](#) for more information and health advice. Tour leaders and tour guides operating overseas tours are advised to refer to the CHP's [health advice on MERS](#).

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## **Public hospital daily update on Wuhan-related cases**

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

As at noon today (January 4), in the past 24 hours, public hospitals have admitted three patients (one male and two female), who have been to Wuhan in the past 14 days and presented with fever and respiratory infection or pneumonia symptoms, aged 4-50. The patients are being treated under isolation in the Prince of Wales Hospital, Tseung Kwan O Hospital and Tuen Mun Hospital now. The Hospital Authority (HA) has reported the cases and sent the specimen to the Department of Health (DH) for testing. The concerned patients are in stable condition. The HA will keep monitoring the patients' condition and provide appropriate treatment.

Including the above-mentioned cases, public hospitals have reported eight concerned patient cases to DH since December 31, 2019. Five of them have been discharged.

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## **SJ to attend Greater Bay Area judicial case seminar in Guangzhou**

The Secretary for Justice, Ms Teresa Cheng, SC, will depart for Guangzhou tomorrow (January 5) to attend a Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area judicial case seminar to be held the next day.

The seminar will be held for the first time at the High People's Court of Guangdong Province, aiming to implement the Outline Development Plan for the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area and strengthen the collaborations between the three places, and pursuant to the Framework Arrangement on legal exchange and mutual learning in legal aspects between Hong Kong and Guangdong entered into by the Department of Justice and the High People's Court of Guangdong Province in September 2019. Judges, lawyers, experts and academics from Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao will take part in the seminar.

Mock trials, to be conducted according to different modes of trial in the three places with the same set of case facts, will form the main part of the seminar. It will be concluded by a discussion and exchange session to enhance the participants' understanding of the three legal and judicial

systems.

Ms Cheng will return to Hong Kong in the evening on January 6.

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## **Missing boy in Chai Wan located**

A boy who went missing in Chai Wan has been located.

Cheng Ho-tin, aged 16, went missing after he left a hostel on Holy Cross Path on December 25, 2019. Staff of the hostel made a report to Police on the same day.

Police located the boy on Fung Kam Street, Yuen Long last night (January 3).

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## **Serious Response Level activated in public hospitals**

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The Hospital Authority (HA) spokesperson today (January 4) announced the activation of the Serious Response Level in public hospitals with immediate effect to tie in with the Government launching the Preparedness and Response Plan for Novel Infectious Disease of Public Health Significance, and raising the response level from "Alert" to "Serious".

Following an ad hoc meeting of the HA Central Committee on Infectious Disease and Emergency Responses on the latest situation of cluster of cases of viral pneumonia with unknown cause in Wuhan this morning, a series of measures to enhance monitoring and infection control in public hospitals and clinics will be implemented with immediate effect.

The HA spokesperson said that frontline healthcare staff of public hospitals have been reminded to pay special attention to patient's clinical information, including the presentation of fever and acute respiratory illness, or pneumonia, and travel history to Wuhan within 14 days before onset of symptoms.

The spokesperson also stressed that any suspected case will be isolated in negative pressure isolation room for treatment with urgent laboratory

investigation will be arranged immediately.

"Under the Serious Response Level, more stringent infection control measures are enforced in public hospitals including visiting arrangement. There is no visiting at isolation wards unless on compassionate ground. For general acute wards, visiting hours would be not more than two hours per day and not more than two visitors per visit. For convalescent and infirmary wards, visiting hours would be not more than four hours per day and not more than two visitors per visit."

The spokesperson also reminded all visitors to public hospitals and clinics are now required to put on surgical masks and perform hand hygiene before and after visiting patient.

Volunteer service and clinical attachment arrangement in public hospitals will be decided in accordance to the latest situation. On personal protection equipment, such as surgical mask and N95 mask, the current stockpile is adequate for three months' consumption. HA will also maintain a close liaison with the suppliers to ensure a sustainable supply. The isolation beds in the seven hospital clusters will be deployed when needed.

The HA would continue to closely collaborate with the Centre for Health Protection in monitoring the latest situation and keep the general public as well as healthcare workers updated on developments on a regular basis.