

Update on cluster of Carbapenemase-Producing Enterobacteriaceae cases in Hong Kong Buddhist Hospital

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

Regarding an earlier announcement on a cluster of patients confirmed as having Carbapenemase-Producing Enterobacteriaceae (CPE) in a mixed medical ward, the spokesperson for Hong Kong Buddhist Hospital (HKBH) gave the following update today (December 17):

According to the contact tracing result, one more 63-year-old female patient has been confirmed as being an asymptomatic carrier of CPE. The patient has been transferred to another hospital and is being treated under isolation with stable condition.

Infection control measures have been stepped up according to the established guidelines in the ward concerned. All other patients in the ward are under close surveillance.

The case has been reported to the Hospital Authority Head Office and the Centre for Health Protection for necessary follow-up.

AFCD seizes illegally kept pigs

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) mounted an operation and seized a batch of illegally kept live pigs in Cheung Po Tsuen, Pat Heung, Yuen Long, today (December 17).

The AFCD received a report earlier about livestock being illegally kept in Cheung Po Tsuen. Subsequent to its investigation, 24 live juvenile pigs and five live adult pigs were found being kept illegally in an open area there. During investigation today, no person admitted ownership of the pigs. Follow-up investigation by the AFCD is under way.

Based on considerations of public health and control of animal diseases, the AFCD will dispose of all the livestock seized and samples will be taken for African swine fever tests.

An AFCD spokesman said that the keeping of livestock and connected activities in Hong Kong are regulated under the Public Health (Animals and Birds) Ordinance. Livestock farms must hold a valid licence for keeping livestock. Any person who contravenes the ordinance is liable to a maximum

fine of \$50,000. Repeat offenders are subject to a maximum fine of \$100,000.

The spokesman warned that people face prosecution if they keep livestock illegally. Suspected cases of illegal keeping of livestock should be reported to 1823.

Suspected MERS case reported

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (December 17) 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	66
Affected area involved	Dubai, United Arab Emirates
High-risk exposure	Nil
Hospital	Queen Elizabeth Hospital
Condition	Stable
MERS-Coronavirus preliminary test result	Negative

"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](#).

[CE to visit Macao](#)

The Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, will lead a Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government delegation to Macao from December 19 to 20 to attend the 20th Anniversary Celebration of Macao's Return to the Motherland and the Inauguration Ceremony of the Fifth-term Government of the Macao Special Administrative Region.

Members of the HKSAR Government delegation include the Financial Secretary, Mr Paul Chan; the Secretary for Justice, Ms Teresa Cheng, SC; the Secretary for Commerce and Economic Development, Mr Edward Yau; the Secretary for Security, Mr John Lee; the Secretary for Food and Health, Professor Sophia Chan; the Secretary for Constitutional and Mainland Affairs, Mr Patrick Nip; and the Director of the Chief Executive's Office, Mr Chan Kwok-ki.

Mrs Lam will return to Hong Kong in the morning on December 20. During her absence, the Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Matthew Cheung Kin-chung, will be the Acting Chief Executive.

[Hong Kong Customs detects largest methamphetamine trafficking case in nearly 10 years \(with photos\)](#)

Hong Kong Customs seized about 110 kilograms of suspected methamphetamine with an estimated market value of about \$77 million at Hong Kong International Airport on December 5. This is the largest methamphetamine trafficking case detected by Customs since 2010, as well as a record seizure of suspected methamphetamine seized by Customs at boundary control points.

Acting on an intelligence exchange with overseas counterparts, Customs officers inspected an air consignment arriving in Hong Kong from Mexico via the United States on December 5. From three cartons of goods declared as

plastic resin, the batch of suspected methamphetamine was found concealed inside 120 plastic boxes wrapped by plastic wrap and vacuum bags, and placed under a batch of plastic resin as a cover.

An investigation is ongoing.

Customs attaches great importance to combating drug trafficking activities. Between January and November this year, Customs seized about 100kg of suspected methamphetamine, representing a 19 per cent drop compared with the same period in 2018. This reflects the department's effectiveness in combating drug trafficking.

With the Christmas and New Year holidays approaching, there is a possibility that crime syndicates may increase drug trafficking in order to meet the keen demand during long holidays. Customs will further step up enforcement action to combat drug trafficking activities before the long holidays.

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).

