

# CHP investigates case of severe paediatric influenza A infection

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (December 29) investigating a case of severe paediatric influenza A infection.

The 11-year-old girl, with good past health, has presented with fever, sore throat, headache and decreased general condition since December 26. She was admitted to Prince of Wales Hospital for further management on the same day. She is now in a stable condition.

Her nasopharyngeal aspirate tested positive for influenza A virus upon laboratory testing. The clinical diagnosis was influenza A infection complicated with encephalopathy.

Initial enquiries revealed that the patient had not yet received seasonal influenza vaccination (SIV) for the current season and had no travel history in the incubation period. Her home contacts have remained asymptomatic so far. The CHP's investigations are ongoing.

"The latest surveillance data showed that the overall influenza activity in Hong Kong continued to increase. It is anticipated that the local influenza activity will further increase and the winter influenza season will arrive soon. Members of the public should maintain good personal protection against influenza," a spokesman for the CHP said.

"Influenza can cause serious illnesses in high-risk individuals and even healthy persons. Given that influenza vaccines are safe and effective, all persons aged 6 months or above, except those with known contraindications, are recommended to receive SIV for personal protection. Eligible persons are urged to receive SIV early for protection against seasonal influenza as it takes about two weeks to develop antibodies. Vaccination among family members is key to protecting their personal and family's health."

The public should maintain good personal and environmental hygiene for protection against influenza and other respiratory illnesses:

- Receive seasonal influenza vaccination for personal protection;
- Wash hands with liquid soap and water properly whenever possibly contaminated;
- When hands are not visibly soiled, clean them with 70 to 80 per cent alcohol-based handrub as an effective alternative;
- Wash or clean hands frequently, especially before touching the mouth, nose or eyes, or after touching public installations such as handrails or door knobs;
- Cover the nose and mouth when sneezing or coughing, and wash hands thoroughly afterwards;

- Dispose of soiled tissue paper properly in a lidded rubbish bin;
- Put on a surgical mask when respiratory symptoms develop;
- Maintain good indoor ventilation;
- Avoid going to crowded or poorly ventilated public places; high-risk individuals may consider putting on surgical masks when staying in such places; and
- Maintain a balanced diet, exercise regularly, take adequate rest, do not smoke and avoid overstress.

For more information, please visit the CHP's [influenza page](#) and weekly [Flu Express](#).

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## **Tseung Kwan O Swimming Pool temporarily closed**

Attention TV/radio announcers:

Please broadcast the following as soon as possible and repeat it at regular intervals:

Here is an item of interest to swimmers.

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department announced today (December 29) that Tseung Kwan O Swimming Pool in Sai Kung District has been temporarily closed for cleaning and superchlorination following the discovery of a small amount of vomit in the pool.

It will be reopened at 9.10pm today.

The department appeals to swimmers to be considerate and to keep the swimming pools clean. They are advised not to swim after a full meal and should use the toilet facilities if necessary before swimming.

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## **Suspected MERS case reported**

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (December 29) 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	40
Affected area involved	Dubai, United Arab Emirates
High-risk exposure	Nil
Hospital	Ruttonjee 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 fever or lower respiratory 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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## [HAD opens temporary cold shelters](#)

In view of the cold weather, the Home Affairs Department has opened 18 temporary shelters today (December 29) for people in need of the service.

The temporary shelters will remain open during the daytime tomorrow (December 30) when the cold weather warning is still in force.

To ensure that cold shelter users can rest in a quiet and undisturbed environment, members of the public or agencies wishing to make donations to shelter users are requested to register with the staff of the shelter first. Donors will then be directed to place the donation items at a specified indoor location. The staff will help notify the shelter users to collect the items on their own.

Anyone seeking temporary refuge or with any questions about the donation arrangement in the cold shelters may call the department's hotline 2835 1473 for more information.

The 18 temporary cold shelters are located at:

Hong Kong Districts:

Central and Western –

Sai Ying Pun Community Complex Community Hall

3/F, Sai Ying Pun Community Complex, 2 High Street, Sai Ying Pun

Eastern –

Causeway Bay Community Centre

7 Fook Yum Road, Causeway Bay

Southern –

Lei Tung Community Hall

Lei Tung Estate, Ap Lei Chau

Wan Chai –

Wan Chai Activities Centre

LG/F, Wan Chai Market, 258 Queen's Road East, Wan Chai

Kowloon Districts:

Kowloon City –

Hung Hom Community Hall

1/F, Kowloon City Government Offices, 42 Bailey Street, Hung Hom

Kwun Tong –

Lam Tin (West) Estate Community Centre

71 Kai Tin Road, Lam Tin

Sham Shui Po –

Nam Cheong District Community Centre

1 Cheong San Lane, Sham Shui Po

Wong Tai Sin –

Tsz Wan Shan (South) Estate Community Centre  
45 Wan Wah Street, Tsz Wan Shan

Yau Tsim Mong –  
Henry G Leong Yaumatei Community Centre  
60 Public Square Street, Yau Ma Tei

New Territories:

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Islands –  
Tung Chung Community Hall  
G/F, Tung Chung Municipal Services Building,  
39 Man Tung Road, Tung Chung

Kwai Tsing –  
Tai Wo Hau Estate Community Centre  
15 Tai Wo Hau Road, Kwai Chung

North –  
Cheung Wah Community Hall  
Cheung Wah Estate, Fanling

Sai Kung –  
Hang Hau Community Hall  
G/F, Sai Kung Tseung Kwan O Government Complex,  
38 Pui Shing Road, Hang Hau, Tseung Kwan O

Sha Tin –  
Lung Hang Estate Community Centre  
Lung Hang Estate, Sha Tin

Tai Po –  
Tai Po Community Centre  
2 Heung Sze Wui Street, Tai Po

Tsuen Wan –  
Lei Muk Shue Community Hall  
G/F, Hong Shue House, Lei Muk Shue Estate, Tsuen Wan

Tuen Mun –  
Butterfly Bay Community Centre  
Butterfly Estate (near Tip Sum House), Tuen Mun

Yuen Long –  
Long Ping Community Hall  
Long Ping Estate, Yuen Long

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# Public Transport Fare Subsidy Scheme to be implemented from January 1, 2019

The Transport Department (TD) today (December 29) reminded members of the public that the Public Transport Fare Subsidy Scheme will be implemented with effect from January 1, 2019. The Scheme is non-means tested and commuters with monthly public transport expenses exceeding \$400 are eligible for the public transport fare subsidy. The Government will provide a subsidy for 25 per cent of actual public transport expenses in excess of \$400, subject to a maximum of \$300 per month. In addition, commuters can continue to benefit from various public transport fare concession schemes provided by the Government and public transport operators under the Scheme.

"The Scheme covers the Mass Transit Railway (MTR), franchised buses, green minibuses, ferries and trams, as well as designated routes of red minibuses, kaitos, non-franchised buses providing residents' services and employees' services approved by the TD," a spokesman for the TD said. The logo of the Scheme will be displayed at a conspicuous location on vehicles or vessels and atop the Octopus readers of the routes of red minibuses, kaitos and non-franchised buses providing residents' services and employees' services that have been approved to join the Scheme (please refer to Annex 1).

The monthly subsidy is calculated on the basis of the actual monthly transport expenses recorded on each Octopus. Generally speaking, the everyday use of Octopus for payment of the fares of public transport services covered by the Scheme will be recorded automatically. Prior registration is not required. The expenses on designated transport tickets that are paid by Octopus or expenses on those designated transport tickets that are encoded in Octopus will also be recorded automatically. Commuters who purchase designated transport tickets by cash or any payment means other than Octopus can go through a simple registration to link up the relevant expenses with the Octopus record for the calculation of the total public transport expenses and subsidy amount under the Scheme.

For most designated transport tickets, registration can be completed simply by presenting the Octopus to the staff of the operators at the time of purchase. For commuters purchasing MTR City Saver, Tuen Mun – Nam Cheong Day Pass, Airport Express Round Trip Tickets, Airport Express Group Tickets, New World First Ferry Holiday Return Tickets and Hong Kong and Kowloon Ferry (including Islands Ferry Company Limited and Winnertex Limited) Monthly Tickets and Holiday Return Tickets, they can perform a simple registration themselves at the Designated Transport Ticket Self-registration Points (please refer to Annex 2) installed at the MTR stations, Light Rail Customer Service Centres and ferry piers selling the relevant transport tickets.

"Commuters will be able to collect the public transport fare subsidy for January 2019 starting from February 16, 2019. The method for subsidy

collection is simple. Commuters can collect the public transport fare subsidy for the previous month by tapping their Octopus at the Subsidy Collection Points (please refer to Annex 3) installed at MTR stations, Light Rail Customer Service Centres and designated ferry piers, the Octopus readers at the cashier of any outlet of 7-Eleven and Circle K, as well as Wellcome supermarkets, the Octopus App or Octopus Service Points. The subsidy will then be credited to the Octopus. The subsidy for each month is valid for collection within three months. Thereafter, on and after the 16th of each month, commuters can collect the subsidy of the previous month through the same channels," the TD spokesman added.

Upon the implementation of the Scheme, commuters may check their record of public transport expenses and subsidy amount through the website of the Scheme ([www.ptfss.gov.hk](http://www.ptfss.gov.hk)), the Octopus App and the hotline of the Scheme (2969 5500). Details of the Scheme are available at the website of the Scheme. For further queries, please call 1823.