

CHP follows up on cluster of Candida auris carrier cases

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (September 17) following up on a cluster of Candida auris carrier cases involving a total of four residents at a residential care home for the elderly (RCHE) in Mong Kok, and reminded members of the public about the proper use of antimicrobials and maintaining personal hygiene against infection.

The CHP received notification from the Hospital Authority that a 72-year-old male resident of the aforementioned RCHE, who was earlier admitted to Kwong Wah Hospital and discharged back to the RCHE, was confirmed on September 2 to have carried Candida auris upon testing.

Upon receiving the notification, the CHP conducted contact tracing and screening and epidemiological investigations at the RCHE, and found three other carrier cases involving two male residents aged 66 and 75 and a female resident aged 83. The four of them, with underlying illnesses, have no symptoms of infection, and are in stable condition.

The CHP is continuing its investigation on the infection source of the cluster and a site inspection has been conducted. It is found that the first case (72-year-old male resident) was discharged without knowing the carrier status and cannot rule out the possibility of infection spread within the RCHE before appropriate infection control measures were implemented.

The CHP has provided infection control advice and training to staff of the RCHE. The RCHE is advised to follow the prevailing guidelines to enhance infection control measures including appropriate placement of carrier residents, strict implementation of contact precautions, enhancement of environmental cleansing and disinfection, use of dedicated medical equipment, toilet and bathing facilities to prevent the spread of Candida auris. The CHP will keep in close liaison with the RCHE concerned, monitor the situation of the residents and ensure the RCHE has carried out the various infection control measures.

A spokesman for the CHP explained that Candida is a fungus commonly found in the natural environment, particularly in moist and warm environments. In humans, it is commonly found in body sites such as the oral cavity, the digestive tract, the skin and the vagina. It is a common fungus living on or in the human body but can occasionally cause infections, especially in individuals with impaired immunity.

Among the different candida species, Candida auris is more drug-resistant. Infections vary from being mild to potentially life-threatening or fatal, depending on which part of the body is affected and the general health condition of the patient. The spokesman stressed that proper use of antimicrobials and maintaining personal hygiene, especially hand hygiene, are

crucial to the prevention of the emergence and cross-transmission of *Candida auris*.

Kwai Chung Hospital announces event of bed bugs found

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The spokesperson for Kwai Chung Hospital (KCH) made the following announcement today (September 17) regarding an event of bedbugs found in the hospital:

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KCH received a report of itching skin from a male patient in a post admission care unit yesterday morning (September 16). Staff immediately conducted a physical examination of the patient, suspecting that the patient was bitten by bedbugs. Upon inspection, bedbugs were found on the patient's bed. Staff then inspected other areas and patients' linens in the ward, where bedbugs were found in a sealed heating facility and on nine other beds. Furthermore, three more male patients were suspected of being bitten by bedbugs.

KCH is extremely concerned about the event and has arranged for a professional pest control vendor to manage the bedbugs in the ward concerned yesterday. KCH has also informed the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department to arrange for a pest control expert to inspect the ward concerned and provide pest control advice today.

KCH has provided appropriate treatment to the four patients concerned and has taken a series of measures to enhance patient protection and prevent the spread of bedbugs. The measures are:

- Conducted pest control, deep cleaning, and continuous environmental surveillance in the ward concerned;
- Arranged skin monitoring for the patients concerned and isolated patients' personal items in sealed plastic bags until confirmation of the absence of bedbugs;
- Replaced the linens in the ward concerned and performed a thorough disinfection; and
- Disposed of all affected mattresses and pillows properly.

KCH will conduct contact investigations and provide guidelines for the prevention and control of bedbugs to prevent the spreading of the insects. Additionally, the hospital will work with a professional pest control vendor

to investigate the source of the bedbug infestation and implement proactive measures to prevent the breeding and spreading of bedbugs within the hospital.

To prevent further infestations, KCH will also implement a series of measures in other areas of the hospital, including enhancing inspections to check if bedbugs are present, arranging for professional vendors to carry out pest control and disinfestation measures, and stepping up cleaning in wards.

KCH will continue to closely monitor the situation and has reported the incident to the Hospital Authority Head Office via the Advance Incident Reporting System.

Housing Authority invites public to join “Well-Being in Public Housing” National Day Photo Contest (with photos)

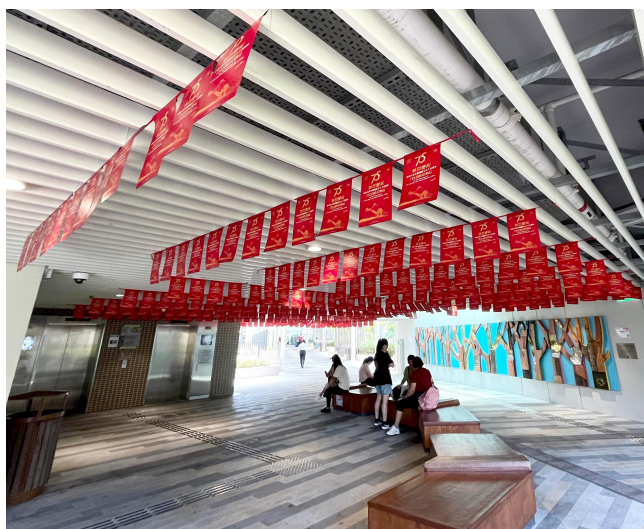
The following is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Housing Authority:

To celebrate the 75th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC) together with the public, the Hong Kong Housing Authority (HA) is organising the "Well-Being in Public Housing" National Day Photo Contest. Members of the public are encouraged to submit photos to showcase the well-being of public housing residents as well as to extend their greetings and share in the joy of National Day, through recording the festive ambience of the celebration decorations for National Day across the HA's public rental housing estates and their commercial facilities.

With the theme "celebrating the 75th anniversary of the founding of the PRC", the photo contest welcomes all permanent residents of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region aged 18 or above to join. Participants may submit their entries via the contest webpage www.housingauthority.gov.hk/photocontest2024 from today (September 17) until October 7.

Award winners include a champion, a first runner-up, a second runner-up and 20 merit awards. The champion will be awarded supermarket vouchers worth up to \$5,000, and each award winner will receive a commemorative book for the HA's 50th anniversary.

For details, please visit www.housingauthority.gov.hk/photocontest2024.



Shatin Hospital reminds members of public to stay alert to suspected fraudulent calls

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The spokesperson for Shatin Hospital (SH) today (September 17) reminded members of the public to stay alert to suspected fraudulent calls:

The hospital received notifications from several hospital staff members that they have received pre-recorded phone call messages at their office extensions, claiming to be calling from SH. The calls requested recipients to follow instructions to collect documents. SH has reported the incident to the Police.

SH reiterates that hospital staff will contact patients in person by phone and provide relevant information to verify identity. Members of the public are advised not to disclose personal information to phone calls with unknown source and to report any suspected fraudulent calls to the Police.

Press conference remarks on events of HKSAR Government in celebration of 75th anniversary of founding of People's Republic of China (with photo/video)

The Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Chan Kwok-ki, held a press conference today (September 17) on various celebratory events and special offers by the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government in celebration of the 75th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China. The Deputy Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Cheuk Wing-hing; the Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism, Mr Kevin Yeung; the Secretary for Home and Youth Affairs, Miss Alice Mak; and the Director of Home Affairs, Mrs Alice Cheung, also attended. Following are the remarks made at the press conference:

Reporter: For the largest-ever street decorations that will be put up across the city for National Day, how much did that cost and who have shouldered that part of the budget? As for total government spending, how much did the Government spend in total? And, were these monies taken from each department's respective budget, or were there more centralised budget to provide for these events? Thank you.

Chief Secretary for Administration: Thank you for your questions. Actually, we have no detailed breakdown on which department spent how much on this celebration. But I would say all the activities, all the events, some major ones, actually, they are sponsored by the commercial sector and some organisations. They are not government money. Actually for some departments and bureaux, if they need to use money, this will be absorbed in their own expenses.

Reporter: What about the decorations? How much did they cost?

Chief Secretary for Administration: No breakdown on that.

Reporter: Can you give more details of the concert hosted on September 30 and the drone show to be hosted that day? What specific elements are being implemented that relate to the 75th anniversary that make these shows unique from the other shows we have had in Hong Kong for this specific occasion?

Secretary for Culture, Sports and Tourism: Are you referring to the event on September 30? It is an event to be held at the West Kowloon Cultural District, and it is organised by my bureau, and with the support of some outside organisations. It is composed of two parts. One is a drone show with 2 099 drones with all the different figures celebrating the 75th anniversary.

For example, we will have some symbols with 75 as a figure. The other part is sort of a gathering of 1 000 youths who are coming together to sing some songs with the theme of celebrating the 75th anniversary. So it is a very good event for both people watching the drone show as well as for the youths to demonstrate their wish to celebrate this very important date for our country.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the remarks.)

