

CHP investigates local measles infection case

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) is today (June 20) investigating a local case of measles infection and reminded the public that vaccination is the most effective way to prevent measles.

The case involves a 28-year-old female. She sought treatment from a private doctor on June 11 for fever, cough, runny nose and red eyes. She developed a skin rash on June 13 and attended the Accident and Emergency Department of Kwong Wah Hospital twice, once on the same day and again on the following day. She was admitted for treatment on June 14. Her blood sample tested positive for antibodies of measles virus upon laboratory testing. She remains hospitalised and is in stable condition.

An epidemiological investigation revealed that the patient was uncertain whether she had received a measles vaccination. She had no travel history during the incubation period. Her six household contacts are currently asymptomatic. During the communicable period, the patient had visited the Kowloon City Baptist Church Kindergarten, located at 206 Argyle Street in Kowloon City. The CHP is conducting medical surveillance on approximately 170 staff members and students of the kindergarten concerned.

As measles is highly infectious, the CHP will set up an enquiry hotline (2125 2372) for contact tracing of the case. The CHP appeals to those who visited the Kowloon City Baptist Church Kindergarten between 11.30am and 12.30pm on June 9 or 10 to call the hotline. Officers of the CHP will assess their conditions and offer health advice. The hotline will operate from 9am to 1pm tomorrow (June 21) and June 22, and from 9am to 5pm between June 23 and 27.

The investigations are ongoing.

"The incubation period of measles (i.e. the time from infection to onset of illness) is seven to 21 days. Symptoms include fever, skin rash, cough, runny nose and red eyes. When such symptoms appear, people should wear surgical masks, stay home from work or school, avoid crowded places and contact with unvaccinated people, especially those with weak immune systems, pregnant women and children under 1 year old. Those who suspect they are infected should consult their doctors as soon as possible and inform healthcare workers of their history of exposure to measles," the Controller of the CHP, Dr Edwin Tsui, said.

"Under the Hong Kong Childhood Immunisation Programme, the overall immunisation coverage in Hong Kong has been maintained at a very high level through the immunisation services provided by the DH's Maternal and Child Health Centres and School Immunisation Teams. As evidenced by the findings on vaccination coverage of primary school students and the territory-wide

immunisation surveys conducted regularly by the DH, the two-dose measles vaccination coverage has remained consistently high, well above 95 per cent, and the local seroprevalence rates of measles virus antibodies reflect that most people in Hong Kong are immune to measles. However, Hong Kong, as a city with a high volume of international travel, still faces the potential risk of importation of the measles virus and its further spread in the local community. Hence, a small number of people who have not completed a measles vaccination (such as non-local-born people including new immigrants, foreign domestic helpers, overseas employees and people coming to Hong Kong for further studies) are still at risk of being infected and spreading measles to other people who do not have immunity against measles, such as children under 1 year old who have not yet received the first dose of the measles vaccine," he added.

People born before 1967 could be considered to have acquired immunity to measles through natural infection, as measles was endemic in many parts of the world and in Hong Kong at that time. People born in or after 1967 who have not yet completed the two doses of measles vaccination or whose measles vaccination history is unknown, should consult their family doctors as soon as possible to complete the vaccination and ensure adequate protection against measles.

The number of measles cases in some overseas countries remains at a high level this year. The outbreaks in North America (including the United States and Canada), Europe and neighbouring areas (including Vietnam, Cambodia and the Philippines) are ongoing due to the relatively low vaccination rate. Furthermore, an increasing number of measles cases have also been recorded in Japan and Australia this year. For those who plan to travel to measles-endemic areas, they should check their vaccination records and medical history as early as possible. If they have not been diagnosed with measles through laboratory tests and have never received two doses of measles vaccine or are not sure if they have received a measles vaccine, they should consult a doctor at least two weeks prior to their trip for vaccination.

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Besides being vaccinated against measles, members of the public should take the following measures to prevent infection:

- Maintain good personal and environmental hygiene;
- Maintain good indoor ventilation;
- Keep hands clean and wash hands properly;
- Wash hands when they are dirtied by respiratory secretions, such as after sneezing;
- Cover the nose and mouth while sneezing or coughing and dispose of nasal and mouth discharge properly;
- Clean used toys and furniture properly; and
- Persons with measles should be kept out of school till four days from the appearance of a rash to prevent the spread of the infection to non-immune persons in school.

For more information on measles, the public may visit the CHP's [measles thematic page](#). Members of the public who are going to travel can visit the website of the DH's [Travel Health Service](#) for news of measles outbreaks outside Hong Kong.

CHP investigates confirmed Mpox case

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) said today (June 20) that it is investigating a confirmed Mpox (also known as Monkeypox) case, and urged the public to be vigilant and avoid close physical contact with persons suspected of contracting Mpox. Meanwhile, high-risk target groups are advised to receive Mpox vaccinations.

The case involves a 28-year-old male. He developed a skin ulcer and a sore throat on June 16 and attended the Yau Ma Tei Male Social Hygiene Clinic of the DH on June 18. He is being isolated at Princess Margaret Hospital and is in stable condition.

An initial investigation revealed that he had a history of high-risk exposure in Hong Kong during the incubation period, but no epidemiological linkages have been established between this case and other confirmed cases previously recorded in Hong Kong. The CHP is continuing its epidemiological investigations of the case and will report it to the World Health Organization (WHO).

The WHO held a special meeting on Mpox early this month and confirmed that Mpox remains a Public Health Emergency of International Concern. The WHO continued to appeal to member states to enhance surveillance and prevention and control measures for Mpox in order to reduce the spread of Mpox. Hong Kong has put in place the Preparedness and Response Plan for Mpox (the Plan) since June 2022 and activated the alert response level under the Plan after the first confirmed case of Mpox in September of the same year. The CHP has implemented a series of measures (including enhanced surveillance, contact tracing, public education and vaccination) which have been effective in preventing local outbreaks of Mpox in the past three years.

Since 2022, a total of 77 Mpox cases (63 local and 14 imported) have been recorded in Hong Kong, of which nine cases were recorded this year. All the patients were male. Epidemiological investigations revealed that most cases had history of high-risk sexual behaviours, including having sex with strangers or without wearing condoms when having sex. Hong Kong has not yet detected any new Mpox strain (Clade Ib) cases.

The CHP reminded high-risk target groups to receive Mpox vaccinations in order to lower the risk of infection or the possibility of having more severe symptoms after infection. In addition, persons who experience Mpox symptoms (including rashes, fever, chills, swollen lymph nodes, exhaustion, muscle

pain, and severe headaches) or suspect themselves of being infected are advised to seek medical attention and receive treatment at once. They should not engage in activities with others that may expose others to their skin rash or body fluids. Members of the public should maintain good personal and hand hygiene to prevent virus transmission or infection through contact. They should also avoid close physical contact with persons or animals suspected of being infected.

The CHP has set up an Mpox telephone hotline (2125 2373), which operates from Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm, excluding public holidays. Those who suspect or are concerned that they may have had high-risk contact with confirmed cases, particularly men who have sex with men or those who have sexual practices with strangers, can use the hotline to make enquiries and receive relevant health advice.

Furthermore, the DH provides vaccination services to high-risk groups of Mpox. The following high-risk target groups are eligible for Mpox vaccinations on a voluntary basis:

1. individuals with high-risk sexual practices, e.g. having multiple sexual partners, sex workers, or having a history of sexually transmitted infection within the past 12 months;
2. healthcare workers responsible for caring for patients with confirmed Mpox;
3. laboratory personnel working with zoonotic pox viruses; and
4. animal care personnel with high risk of exposure in case of Mpox occurrences in animals in Hong Kong.

High-risk target groups can receive Mpox walk-in vaccinations at any of the DH's Social Hygiene Service Clinics (SoCHS) (namely Chai Wan SoCHS, Wan Chai Male SoCHS, Wan Chai Female SoCHS, Yau Ma Tei Male SoCHS, Yau Ma Tei Female SoCHS, Yung Fung Shee SoCHS, Fanling SoCHS and Tuen Mun SoCHS) and the DH's Yau Ma Tei Integrated Treatment Centre.

Meanwhile, the DH's Kowloon Bay Integrated Treatment Centre and the Hospital Authority's Special Medical Clinics at Queen Elizabeth Hospital and Princess Margaret Hospital also provide Mpox vaccination services for their clients.

For more details, please visit the CHP's page on [Mpox](#) and [Mpox Vaccination Programme](#).

[Joint announcement of People's Bank of](#)

China and Hong Kong Monetary Authority

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

To deepen financial cooperation between the Mainland and Hong Kong, and to meet the demand of residents in both places for secure, efficient and convenient cross-boundary remittance service, the People's Bank of China (PBoC) and the Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) have jointly pushed forward the cooperation between the China National Clearing Center (CNCC) and the Hong Kong Interbank Clearing Limited (HKICL) in linking the faster payment systems in the Mainland and Hong Kong (hereafter referred to as Payment Connect). It is hereby announced that:

1. Payment Connect refers to the linkage between the Mainland's Internet Banking Payment System (IBPS) and Hong Kong's Faster Payment System (FPS). It supports real-time cross-boundary payment services for residents in both places, in compliance with relevant laws and regulations of the two places.

2. Payment Connect supports the participating institutions of the faster payment systems in both places to provide convenient remittance services in Renminbi and Hong Kong dollar for residents in both places under the current account. It also supports the participating institutions in both places, on the basis of implementing relevant policies, to provide instant remittance services for salary disbursements, payments of tuition fees and medical bills, as well as other use cases beneficial to the integration of the two places.

3. Payment Connect represents another key measure of the Central Government in supporting the development of Hong Kong. It brings convenience to people's daily lives, deepens financial cooperation between the Mainland and Hong Kong, and enhances the efficiency and service quality of cross-boundary payments between the two places. It also facilitates economic and trade activities and flow of people, benefits Hong Kong in elevating its competitive edge, and reinforces its position as an international financial centre and a global offshore Renminbi business hub.

4. Under the framework of the Memorandum of Understanding on Cross-Boundary Linkage of Payment Systems between the Mainland and Hong Kong, the PBoC and the HKMA will establish an effective collaboration mechanism for the Payment Connect to ensure the related services are operated in an orderly manner and comply with the respective legal and regulatory requirements in the two places.

5. The CNCC and HKICL, having regard to the operation procedures and risk management principles, will coordinate with participating institutions to provide secure and efficient cross-boundary payment services to residents in both places, ensuring the smooth operation of the system and its transactions, while actively coordinating in resolving issues which may arise.

6. Institutions participating in the Payment Connect shall strictly comply with the relevant laws and regulations on anti-money laundering, counter-terrorist financing, counter-proliferation financing and cross-boundary payment settlement.

7. Payment Connect will be launched on June 22, 2025.

Note: This is a translated version of the official announcement in Chinese.

Speech by CE at HKEX 25th Anniversary Celebrations (English only) (with video)

â€‹Following is the video speech by the Chief Executive, Mr John Lee, at the Hong Kong Exchanges and Clearing Limited (HKEX) 25th Anniversary Celebrations today (June 20):

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

I'm delighted to speak to you in celebrating the 25th anniversary of HKEX.

What a grand day this is for HKEX, the fast-beating heart of the financial community that has been instrumental in powering Hong Kong's rise these past 25 years. With the resounding support of our country, our financial community, which also includes our world-class regulators and the financial and professional services sector, helps to cement Hong Kong's place as one of the world's top three international financial centres.

For HKEX – for all of us – it's been a remarkable journey. Since HKEX's listing in 2000, Hong Kong has emerged as a premier global listings destination, with the number of listed companies here rising from 790 to more than 2 600 today.

A few more telling numbers. Over the past quarter of a century, our total market capitalisation has soared six times, while the average daily turnover has increased nine times.

Over the years, Hong Kong has become known, worldwide, as a preferred destination for a great many large and high-profile initial public offerings (IPOs).

This year has been particularly rewarding. Last month, we welcomed the largest global IPO of the year to date. And Hong Kong leads the world in IPO

fundraising, with 29 listings and raising nearly US\$10 billion in the first five months of the year. That, ladies and gentlemen, is a seven-time growth, year-on-year.

That remarkable surge in IPOs and market turnover also manifests strong global confidence in our financial ecosystem.

HKEX plays a crucial role, too, in facilitating Hong Kong's rise as a "super connector" and "super value-adder" between our country and the world at large. This past year, it added Abu Dhabi and Dubai to its list of recognised stock exchanges, which now total 20.

And then there's the mutual access programmes linking up the markets between Hong Kong and the Mainland, from the expansion of eligible ETFs (exchange-traded funds) under Stock Connect, and the enhancement of mutual recognition of funds arrangement, to the improvement measures for Bond Connect trading, and the recent announcement of plans to expand products under Swap Connect.

Together, these initiatives have realised deeper, more interconnected financial ties between the Mainland and Hong Kong markets.

Despite today's global challenges, and the economic chaos they're creating, the Hong Kong SAR (Special Administrative Region) Government is resolutely committed to working with HKEX and our regulators to boost market liquidity.

I am grateful to HKEX for its unwavering support of the Government's policy priorities. In the past year, HKEX has adopted a variety of initiatives, including enhancing the specialist technology listing regime, narrowing the trading spread and launching its technology enterprises channel.

Those measures also include maintaining trading under severe weather conditions. That enables investors to manage their portfolios and minimise market risks.

Earlier this year, I am pleased to note, the London Metal Exchange, a wholly-owned subsidiary of HKEX, added Hong Kong as an approved delivery point in its global warehousing network.

The approval of seven new warehouses here in just a few months is a clear and compelling statement of Hong Kong's status as an international financial, shipping and trade centre. It will go a long way to supporting our building of a vibrant commodity trading ecosystem in Hong Kong, and attracting more companies to establish a presence here.

Once again, my heartfelt congratulations to HKEX on your silver jubilee – a quarter of a century of outstanding service. Working together, I'm confident we will ensure Hong Kong's continuing success as one of the world's surpassing financial centres.

Thank you.

Immigration Department repatriates 56 unsubstantiated non-refoulement claimants to their places of origin (with photos)

The Immigration Department (ImmD) carried out repatriation operations from June 18 to today (June 20). A total of 56 unsubstantiated non-refoulement claimants who were illegal immigrants and overstayers were repatriated to their places of origin. The persons removed comprised 28 men and 28 women. Among them were discharged prisoners who had committed criminal offences and had been sentenced to imprisonment as well as former foreign domestic helpers.

The ImmD has been committed to promptly removing unsubstantiated non-refoulement claimants from Hong Kong to maintain effective immigration control and safeguard the public interest. Under the updated removal policy effective from December 7, 2022, the ImmD may generally proceed with the removal of a claimant whose judicial review case has been dismissed by the Court of First Instance of the High Court, thereby enhancing the efficiency of and efforts in removing unsubstantiated claimants.

Depending on circumstances and needs, the ImmD will remain committed to expediting the removal process and actively maintain close liaison with governments of major source countries of non-refoulement claimants, airline companies and other government departments to repatriate unsubstantiated non-refoulement claimants from Hong Kong as soon as practicable through all appropriate measures.

