

HAD distributes complimentary COVID-19 rapid test kits to households, cleansing workers and property management staff in Tuen Mun, Wong Tai Sin and Yau Tsim Mong Districts

â€œIn light of positive test results for the COVID-19 virus from sewage samples collected in Tuen Mun, Wong Tai Sin and Yau Tsim Mong Districts, the Home Affairs Department (HAD) said today (December 21) that the Tuen Mun District Office (TMDO), the Wong Tai Sin District Office (WTSDO) and the Yau Tsim Mong District Office (YTMDO) have distributed a total of about 58 000 COVID-19 rapid test kits to households, cleansing workers and property management staff living and working in the Districts.

The TMDO distributed rapid test kits to households, cleansing workers and property management staff living and working in Richland Garden and Melody Garden for voluntary testing through the property management companies.

The WTSDO also distributed rapid test kits to households, cleansing workers and property management staff living and working in Bay View Garden, Wealth Garden, Fortune Garden, Hing Yip Building, Choi Hung Villa, Man Tak House, Ngau Chi Wan Village, Lung Chi Path and Kam Chi Path (14-16, 21-23, 22-24 and 29-31) for voluntary testing through the property management companies and the Village Representative.

In addition, the YTMDO distributed rapid test kits to households, cleansing workers and property management staff living and working in Florient Rise, Hoi Ming Court, Peony House North Block, Peony House East Block, Peony House West Block, 3-25A Ka Shin Street and 4-26A Pok Man Street for voluntary testing through the owners' corporations. The YTMDO also arranged to distribute rapid test kits to households living in "three-nil" buildings with positive sewage test results in the District.

The HAD made the above arrangements in the hope of identifying infected persons early.

Members of the public may refer to the demonstration video produced by the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) under the Department of Health (DH) via www.youtube.com/watch?v=yzFAUzTtmKk to learn how to use the rapid antigen test (RAT) kit.

Persons testing positive through an RAT should take a photo of the test result and declare the result within 24 hours via the Declaration System for Individuals Tested Positive for COVID-19 Using Rapid Antigen Test (www.chp.gov.hk/ratp). If members of the public encounter difficulties in

using the online platform, they can call the automated system at 183 6119 to register their identification document and telephone number. The CHP under the DH will contact the relevant person later to complete the report procedure. There is no need to declare negative test results.

The Government appeals for the co-operation of members of the public to safeguard the health of themselves and their families by undergoing testing on a voluntary basis and fighting the virus together. The Government urges all individuals who are in doubt about their own health condition, or individuals with infection risks (such as individuals who visited places with epidemic outbreaks or had contact with cases that tested positive), to undergo testing promptly for early identification of infected persons to reduce the transmission risks of COVID-19.

Government gazettes compulsory testing notice

The Government exercises the power under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) and publishes in the Gazette a compulsory testing notice, which requires any person who had been present at 16 specified places during the specified period (persons subject to compulsory testing) to undergo a COVID-19 nucleic acid test.

In view of a number of cases testing positive, 12 specified places are included in the compulsory testing notice. Furthermore, since some sewage samples collected in Sau Mau Ping and Ho Man Tin have tested positive, four specified places are included in the compulsory testing notice. The Government strongly reminds members of the public to strictly follow the compulsory testing requirements and undergo testing on time as required. Community testing centres (CTCs)/community testing stations (CTSs)/ad-hoc mobile specimen collection stations have been set up by the Government in different districts to facilitate testing to be conducted in compliance with the compulsory testing notice. The above compulsory testing requirement applies to those who have completed a COVID-19 vaccination course as well.

Persons who have tested positive in the past three months (including positive cases tested either by nucleic acid tests recorded by the Department of Health (DH) or by rapid antigen tests (RATs) that have been self-declared to the DH) and young children aged under 3 do not need to undergo compulsory testing. For those who need to undergo compulsory testing, they must undergo nucleic acid tests in accordance with relevant compulsory testing notices and cannot use RATs to fulfil the requirement of such notices. In other words, a negative RAT result cannot be deemed as fulfilling the compulsory testing requirement. Furthermore, unless a person subject to compulsory testing has

obtained a medical certificate proving that he or she is unfit to undergo testing using a sample taken through a throat swab because of health reasons, the person cannot provide a deep throat saliva sample to fulfil the compulsory testing requirement.

Details of the compulsory testing notice are available on the Centre for Health Protection (CHP)'s website via the following link:
www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/ctn_20221221.pdf.

If any persons test positive under compulsory testing, such positive cases will be handled in the same manner as in those identified through other nucleic acid tests or self-declared through RATs. Their isolation arrangements (as well as the quarantine arrangements of their household members) are no different from other positive cases.

Persons subject to compulsory testing in accordance with a compulsory testing notice must undergo professional swab sampling at any of the ad-hoc mobile specimen collection stations, CTCs/CTSs or recognised local medical testing institutions in order to fulfil the requirements for compulsory testing. Stool specimen may be used for testing when collecting respiratory specimen is not feasible for young children and those who are not suitable for respiratory specimen collection. For details on obtaining stool specimen bottles, please refer to the COVID-19 thematic website:
www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/Stool_bottle_collection_points.pdf.

If the Tropical Cyclone Warning Signal No. 3 or above, the Red or Black Rainstorm Warning Signal or the post-super typhoon "extreme conditions" announcement by the Government is in force at any time during the period for undergoing the compulsory testing, the period for undergoing the compulsory testing will be extended for one day.

Vaccines are highly effective in preventing severe cases and deaths from COVID-19. They can provide protection to those vaccinated to prevent serious complications and even death after infection. The Government appeals to persons who are not yet vaccinated to get vaccinated without delay. In view of the arrival of the Comirnaty Original/Omicron BA.4-5 bivalent vaccine in Hong Kong, members of the public may choose to receive the BioNTech bivalent vaccine when they make appointments through the online booking system to receive the third, fourth or fifth dose (or the second, third or fourth dose for recovered persons), while the Sinovac or the BioNTech ancestral strain vaccines can still be used. Eligible persons aged 60 or above with same-day tickets may choose the type of vaccine to be administered on site.

[CTCs/CTSs across the city](#) provide free nucleic acid testing services for the public, including those who need to undergo compulsory testing, staff members of residential care homes for the elderly and residential care homes for persons with disabilities, visitors to public hospitals and residential care homes and all elderly people aged 60 or above. Persons who wish to undergo a free test just need to make an online booking or use the Testing Registration QR code in the "LeaveHomeSafe" mobile application for registration.ã€€

Booking services are available for all 86 CTC/CTSs. Members of the public can make bookings through the online booking system (booking.communitytest.gov.hk/form/index.jsp). Members of the public can also fill in their personal information in advance to obtain the Testing Registration Code QR code through the "LeaveHomeSafe" mobile application. They can present that QR code for scanning before testing at a service point thereafter, thus saving their time spent on registration and queueing.

To facilitate the holding of community activities and maintenance works, starting from December 29 (next Thursday), the CTS at Po Hong Park in Tseung Kwan O will be relocated to the open area outside Tseung Kwan O Sports Centre (near Po Lam MTR station) opposite Po Hong Park.

Persons subject to compulsory testing may choose to undergo testing via the following routes:

(a) For tests which require using a sample taken through combined nasal and throat swabs or throat swab

1. To visit any of the ad-hoc mobile specimen collection stations (see the list and target groups (if applicable) at www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/early-testing.html) for testing;
2. To attend any of the CTCs/CTSs (see the list at www.communitytest.gov.hk/en);
3. To self-arrange testing provided by private laboratories which are recognised by the DH and can issue SMS notifications in respect of test results (see the list at www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/List_of_recognised_laboratories_RTPCR.pdf), and the relevant sample must be taken through combined nasal and throat swabs or throat swab; or
4. To use a specimen bottle distributed to the relevant specified premises by the CHP (if applicable), and return the specimen bottle with the stool sample collected per relevant guidelines.

(b) For persons holding a medical certificate issued by a registered medical practitioner proving that they are unfit to undergo testing using a sample taken through a throat swab because of health reasons

1. To obtain a deep throat saliva specimen collection pack from post offices, vending machines set up at MTR stations or designated general out-patient clinics (GOPCs) of the Hospital Authority and return the specimen to one of the designated specimen collection points (see the distribution points and times, and the specimen collection points and times, at www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/early-testing.html);
2. To undergo testing at any of the GOPCs of the Hospital Authority as instructed by a medical professional of the Hospital Authority; or
3. To self-arrange testing provided by private laboratories which are recognised by the DH and can issue SMS notifications in respect of test results.

A Government spokesman cautioned that testing received at the Accident and Emergency Departments of the Hospital Authority, or testing provided by

private laboratories which cannot issue SMS notifications in respect of test results, does not comply with the requirements of the aforementioned compulsory testing notice.

"If persons subject to compulsory testing have symptoms, they should seek medical attention immediately and undergo testing as instructed by a medical professional. They should not attend the ad-hoc mobile specimen collection stations or the CTCs/CTSs."

Persons subject to compulsory testing must keep the SMS notifications containing the result of the test and the relevant medical certificate (if applicable) for checking by a law enforcement officer when the officer requires the persons to provide information about their undergoing the specified test.

Any enquiries on compulsory testing arrangements may be addressed to the hotline at 6275 6901, which operates daily from 9am to 6pm.

The Government will continue to trace possibly infected persons who had been to relevant premises, and seriously verify whether they had complied with the compulsory testing notices. Any person who fails to comply with the compulsory testing notices commits an offence and the maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine at level 4 (\$25,000) and imprisonment for six months. The fixed penalty for discharging the liability is \$10,000. The person may also be issued with a compulsory testing order requiring him or her to undergo testing within a specified time frame. Any person in breach of the compulsory testing order would be liable to a fine at level 5 (\$50,000) and imprisonment for six months.

The spokesman said, "The Government urges all individuals who are in doubt about their own health conditions, or individuals with infection risks (such as individuals who visited places with epidemic outbreaks or had contact with cases tested positive), to undergo testing promptly for early identification of infected persons."

CHP investigates outbreak of upper respiratory tract infection at residential child care centre

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (December 21) investigating an outbreak of upper respiratory tract infection (URTI) at a residential child care centre in Wan Chai, and appeals to members of the public and staff of institutions to stay alert and maintain strict personal and environmental hygiene.

The outbreak involves 20 children, comprising 10 boys and 10 girls between 4 and 27 months old. They developed symptoms since December 4. All of them have received medical consultation, and hospitalisation was required for 12 children. Four of them tested positive for adenovirus, rhinovirus or respiratory syncytial virus upon laboratory testing. All of them are in stable condition. Their COVID-19 rapid antigen test results were negative.

The CHP has provided preventive advice against URTI to the centre, such as advising the centre to arrange cleaning and disinfection, to open windows where appropriate for better ventilation and to separate affected children from other children, etc. The centre has been placed under medical surveillance.

The public should maintain good personal and environmental hygiene against influenza and other respiratory illnesses and note the following:

- Receive seasonal influenza vaccination for personal protection;
- Surgical masks can prevent transmission of respiratory viruses from ill persons. It is essential for persons who are symptomatic (even if having mild symptoms) to wear a surgical mask;
- Wear a surgical mask when taking public transport or staying in crowded places. It is important to wear a mask properly, including performing hand hygiene before wearing and after removing a mask;
- Avoid touching one's eyes, mouth and nose;
- 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;
- Cover the nose and mouth with tissue paper when sneezing or coughing. Dispose of soiled tissue paper properly into a lidded rubbish bin, and wash hands thoroughly afterwards;
- Maintain good indoor ventilation;
- When having respiratory symptoms, wear a surgical mask, refrain from work or attending classes at school, avoid going to crowded places and seek medical advice promptly; and
- Maintain a balanced diet, exercise regularly, take adequate rest, do not smoke and avoid overstress.

Members of the public, particularly children, the elderly and those with chronic diseases, should consult a doctor promptly if they develop symptoms of respiratory tract infection.

[Woman sentenced for violating](#)

Prevention and Control of Disease Regulation

A 59-year-old woman was sentenced by the Fanling Magistrates' Courts today (December 21) for violating the Prevention and Control of Disease Regulation (Cap. 599A).

The woman earlier tested positive for COVID-19 and was issued with an isolation order. Before the end of the isolation period, she left the place of isolation on October 16 and 17 respectively. She was charged with two counts of contravening sections 32(1) and (3) of the Regulation and was fined a total of \$10,000 by the Fanling Magistrates' Courts today.

A spokesman for the Department of Health said that co-operation of and support by members of the public play a critical role in the anti-epidemic work. They must strictly observe relevant requirements in order to fight the pandemic and minimise the risk of transmission in the community. The spokesman reiterated that resolute actions will be taken against anyone who breaches the relevant regulations.

Update on supplies from Mainland

The Task Force on Supplies from the Mainland led by the Transport and Logistics Bureau (TLB) has been working closely with the Guangdong Provincial Government and the Shenzhen Municipal People's Government to explore various means to stabilise the supply of goods from the Mainland to Hong Kong.

A spokesperson for the TLB said that the "Sea Express" water transportation service from the Mainland to Hong Kong has been fully launched and its capacity is rising to increase the supplies of fresh food, other daily necessities and manufacturing materials. The current supply of fresh food from the Mainland is stable.

The spokesperson said today (December 21) that Shenzhen operated 41 cargo vessel trips and transported around 3 920 twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs) of cross-boundary supplies by water yesterday (December 20), equivalent to about 18 630 tonnes of goods, of which around 10 TEUs (about 40 tonnes) were fresh food and around 3 910 TEUs (about 18 590 tonnes) were non-fresh food, according to information from the Mainland authorities.

Since the launch of services from the three ports in Shenzhen since February 18 to yesterday, a total of around 1 400 650 TEUs of cross-boundary supplies have been transported, equivalent to about 6 651 050 tonnes of

goods, of which around 3 280 TEUs (about 27 740 tonnes) were fresh food and around 1 397 370 TEUs (about 6 623 310 tonnes) were non-fresh food.

Meanwhile, to avoid a spillover of the epidemic, the Transport Department (TD) arranges for dedicated staff to conduct rapid nucleic acid tests, using nasopharyngeal swabs for specimen collection, for cross-boundary goods vehicle drivers at various land boundary control points. Only drivers with a negative result are allowed to enter the Mainland. A total of 4 199 rapid nucleic acid tests were conducted yesterday, among which 38 cases that tested preliminarily positive or indeterminate were found. The TD has passed the cases to the Department of Health for follow-up.

The TLB will closely monitor the situation and co-operate with the Mainland authorities to facilitate and implement various measures to ensure both smooth cross-boundary land transport and a stable goods supply to Hong Kong, while reducing the risk of epidemic transmission in both the Mainland and Hong Kong.