

Extension of special visiting arrangements in public hospitals

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The Hospital Authority (HA) spokesperson announced today (May 26) that the special visiting arrangements will be extended to other acute and specialist hospitals with inpatient services, and child and adolescent psychiatric wards or units from next Tuesday (May 31) (details shown in the Appendix).

The HA spokesperson said, "The HA understands the desire of relatives to visit patients. Having considered the latest stabilised epidemic situation, the HA decided to further extend the special visiting arrangements to other public hospitals in order to address their needs."

For patients with a high physical dependence, hospitals will contact relatives to offer early appointments if situations allow. For child and adolescent psychiatric patients, the special visiting arrangements are applicable to patients below the age of 18 who have been transferred out of observation areas. With the exception of patients staying in intensive care units, infectious disease or isolation wards, other psychiatric wards and wards or cubicles admitting COVID-19 patients, one to two visits by one registered visitor will be arranged for each patient every week, with a one hour duration for each visit. Hospital staff will contact relatives in the next few days for appointments. Relatives are not required to call the hospital for booking themselves.

Visitors are required to comply with the requirement of the Vaccine Pass, including having received the required dosage of COVID-19 vaccine, or being recovered persons of COVID-19 in the Government's record, and holding the relevant vaccination record or a record of a recovered person.

In addition, visitors must provide either a nucleic acid test negative result obtained within 48 hours, or a rapid antigen test negative result obtained within 24 hours before the visit. Visitors who have recovered from COVID-19 within 90 days (starting from the 14th day after receiving confirmation of infection) will be exempted from the testing requirements if they can provide relevant proof of infection and recovery.

The special visiting arrangements are not applicable for persons having a COVID-19 Vaccination Medical Exemption Certificate with a valid exemption of Vaccine Pass. The HA spokesperson said, "Public hospitals are unable to arrange visits for unvaccinated individuals since they are at higher risk of infection. It is to protect them from being infected, as well as to protect patients and healthcare staff."

The requirements for the Vaccine Pass and COVID-19 testing also apply to

compassionate visits under specific circumstances. The compassionate visiting arrangements for critical or end-of-life patients will remain unchanged.

All visitors entering public hospitals are required to comply with the infection control measures such as wearing surgical masks, temperature checking and filling in health declaration forms. Visitors are advised to complete the health declaration form found on the HA webpage or the mobile app "HA Go" 24 hours before the visit and show the QR code generated by the system to ward staff. Moreover, visitors are also required to observe the requirements of the "LeaveHomeSafe" venue QR code when entering public hospitals.

The HA hopes the patients' family members can understand and comply with the visiting arrangements under the current epidemic situation. All hospitals will continue to facilitate compassionate and video visiting as far as practicable.

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[Public hospitals daily update on COVID-19 cases](#)

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As at 0.00am today (May 26), a total of 447 patients who tested positive for COVID-19 are currently hospitalised for treatment, including 55 new patients. Among the patients staying in isolation facilities, 75 patients are

in isolation wards, 10 patients are in second-tier isolation wards and 38 patients are in the North Lantau Hospital Hong Kong Infection Control Centre, of which 18 in total are new patients. Among the hospitalised patients, 11 of them are in critical condition and nine are in serious condition, of which five critical patients are receiving intensive care. There were 85 patients who have recovered, including 59 patients who have been discharged. In addition, two patients who passed away in public hospitals were reported.

In the fifth wave of the epidemic, there are 50 024 patients who have recovered so far, including 49 718 patients who have been discharged. And since early 2020, there are 62 404 patients who have recovered, including 62 098 patients who have been discharged.

The Hospital Authority will maintain close contact with the Centre for Health Protection to monitor the latest developments and to inform the public and healthcare workers on the latest information in a timely manner.

Public hospitals daily update on COVID-19 cases

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CHP investigates 32 confirmed and 64 asymptomatic additional SARS-CoV-2 virus cases with 15 cases pending status by nucleic acid tests as well as 140 cases tested positive by rapid antigen tests

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) today (May 26) announced the latest epidemic situation of COVID-19. As of 0.00am, May 26, the CHP was investigating 111 additional cases that tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus by nucleic acid tests (32 confirmed cases, 64 asymptomatic cases and 15 cases with pending case status) in the past 24 hours. Separately, 140 additional positive cases through rapid antigen tests (RATs) (74 symptomatic cases and 66 asymptomatic cases) were reported. Hong Kong has recorded a total of 761 620 and 449 718 cases that have tested positive by nucleic acid tests and RATs respectively for the SARS-CoV-2 virus so far.

The aforementioned newly reported cases consist of 36 imported cases (31 cases and five cases tested positive by nucleic acid tests and RATs respectively). The CHP is continuing with epidemiological investigations on the cases. Please refer to the "COVID-19 Thematic Website" (www.coronavirus.gov.hk) for more information.

Meanwhile, according to the whole genome sequencing analysis by the DH's Public Health Laboratory Services Branch, Hong Kong has recorded a total of 13 cases, 70 cases, 12 cases and three cases carrying the sub-lineages BA.2.12, BA.2.12.1, BA.4 and BA.5 under the Omicron mutant strain respectively.

In addition, as of 0.00am, May 26, a total of 9 161 death cases that had tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus during the fifth wave (since December 31, 2021) were recorded, with 9 083 and 75 deaths reported from the Hospital Authority and public mortuaries respectively as well as three deaths reported from the Chinese University of Hong Kong Medical Centre. Hong Kong has so far recorded a total of 9 374 death cases that have tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus.

Furthermore, among the earlier cases by nucleic acid tests reported, there were cases (including pending cases) changed to confirmed, asymptomatic or re-positive cases. As at yesterday (May 25), the total number of confirmed cases was 332 143, while the figures for asymptomatic cases, re-positive cases and pending/unknown cases recorded since January 1 were 198 870, 24 and 230 472 respectively.

The spokesman for the CHP stressed that as the local situation of COVID-19 infection is still severe, the CHP strongly appeals to the community to continue to comply with social distancing measures, avoid going out and refrain from participating in unnecessary or crowded activities or gatherings. This would lower the risk of infection and prevent the virus from spreading in the community.

The spokesman reminded that COVID-19 vaccines are highly effective in preventing severe cases and deaths from the SARS-CoV-2 virus. They can provide effective protection to those vaccinated in preventing serious complications and even death after infection. People who have yet to receive vaccination, especially senior citizens, chronic patients and other immunocompromised persons who face a higher chance of death after COVID-19 infection, should get vaccinated as early as possible for self-protection and to reduce the risk of falling seriously ill and death should they get infected.