

Public hospitals daily update on COVID-19 cases

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

As at 0.00am today (May 17), a total of 686 patients who tested positive for COVID-19 are currently being treated in the North Lantau Hospital Hong Kong Infection Control Centre, the Hospital Authority (HA) Infectious Disease Centre and public hospitals, including 66 new patients. 103 confirmed patients are being treated in isolation wards, of which 19 are new patients. The rest of the confirmed patients are continued to be hospitalised or re-admitted due to other medical reasons. Those patients have recovered and are non-infectious, who therefore do not need to be treated in isolation wards. There were 88 patients who have recovered, including 70 patients who have been discharged. In addition, no confirmed patient passed away in public hospitals yesterday.

In the fifth wave of the epidemic, there are 49 446 patients who have recovered so far, including 49 000 patients who have been discharged. And since early 2020, there are 61 826 patients who have recovered, including 61 380 patients who have been discharged.

The HA 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.

CHP investigates additional SARS-CoV-2 virus cases by nucleic acid tests and rapid antigen tests as well as four imported cases earlier involving Omicron mutant strain sub-lineage BA.4

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health today (May 17) announced the latest epidemic situation of COVID-19. As of 0.00am, May 17, the CHP was investigating 166 additional cases that tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus by nucleic acid tests (52 confirmed cases, 96 asymptomatic cases and 18 cases with pending case status) in the past 24 hours. Separately, 162 additional positive cases through rapid antigen tests (RATs) (91 symptomatic cases and 71 asymptomatic cases) were reported. Hong

Kong has recorded a total of 760 681 and 448 387 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 39 imported cases (33 cases and six 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, whole genome sequencing analysis by the DH's Public Health Laboratory Services Branch confirmed that four earlier imported cases were found to carry the sub-lineage BA.4 under the Omicron mutant strain. The cases involve three males and one female aged 42 to 67 who arrived in Hong Kong from the United Kingdom and Canada on May 8. All of them tested positive during compulsory quarantine at designated quarantine hotels. Together with the above new cases, Hong Kong has recorded seven imported sub-lineage BA.4 cases in total so far. No cases of the sub-lineage were found in the local community so far, and the CHP will continue to closely monitor the latest developments.

In addition, as of 0.00am, May 17, a total of 9 148 death cases that had tested positive for the SARS-CoV-2 virus during the fifth wave (since December 31, 2021) were recorded (i.e. no new reported cases), with 9 070 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 9 361 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 16), the total number of confirmed cases was 331 672, while the figures for asymptomatic cases, re-positive cases and pending/unknown cases recorded since January 1 were 198 255, 23 and 230 565 respectively.

As a passenger flight (QR818) operated by Qatar Airways arriving in Hong Kong from Doha, Qatar, on May 15, had three passengers who tested positive upon arrival, as well as one passenger who failed to comply with the requirements specified under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Regulation of Cross-boundary Conveyances and Travellers) Regulation (Cap. 599H), the DH thus invoked Cap. 599H to prohibit the landing of passenger flights in Hong Kong from Doha operated by Qatar Airways from May 17 to 21.

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.

â€‹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.

[Hospital Authority announces positive patient cases detected via admission screening or testing and clusters of nosocomial COVID-19 infections](#)

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority.

The Hospital Authority today (May 17) announced information regarding patients who tested positive via admission screening or testing with patients or staff members identified as close contacts and nosocomial COVID-19 infection cases.

â€‹ The following are the statistics of patients who tested positive via admission screening or by testing in public hospitals with patients or staff members identified as close contacts:

Hospital/clinic	Number of patients who tested positive	Number of patients identified as close contacts	Number of staff members without appropriate personal protective equipment identified as close contacts
Tuen Mun Hospital	1	2	–

â€‹ The following are the statistics of clusters of nosocomial infection cases in public hospitals:

Hospital/clinic	Number of patients who tested positive	Number of staff members who tested positive
Siu Lam Hospital	–	1

Siu Lam Hospital announced a female patient of a severe intellectual disability ward tested positive for COVID-19 on Sunday (May 15). A patient care assistant who worked in the ward tested positive for COVID-19 yesterday (May 16) after contact tracing conducted in the hospital. The hospital is investigating the linkage between the two cases. Seven patients in the same dormitory have been identified as close contacts earlier and have been arranged for quarantine. The patient and staff member concerned are being treated in isolation and are in stable condition. Admission and visiting arrangements for the ward concerned have been suspended. A thorough cleaning and disinfection of the ward were arranged. As a precautionary measure, the hospital has arranged testing for all patients and staff members. The hospital will continue to closely monitor the health condition of patients and staff members, and communicate with the Centre for Health Protection on the latest situation.

[Hong Kong Customs seizes suspected illicit cigarettes worth about \\$6.2 million](#)

Hong Kong Customs yesterday (May 16) seized a total of about 2.25 million suspected illicit cigarettes with an estimated market value of about \$6.2 million and a duty potential of about \$4.3 million in Ping Che and Tsuen Wan.

In the first case, Customs officers conducted an anti-illicit cigarette operation in Ping Che yesterday afternoon and raided a suspected illicit cigarette storage on Ping Che Road. During the operation, Customs officers seized about 2.21 million suspected illicit cigarettes inside a metal hut and a light goods vehicle. A 39-year-old man suspected to be in connection with the case was arrested and the light goods vehicle involved has also been detained.

In the second case, Customs officers intercepted a private car in Lei Muk Shue Estate, Tsuen Wan, yesterday afternoon and seized about 40 000 suspected illicit cigarettes inside the car. During the interception, the driver attempted to resist and tried to escape by driving the vehicle to bump into a Customs vehicle. Customs officers at last successfully arrested a 34-year-old male driver and a 21-year-old man suspected to be in connection with

the case. The private car involved has also been detained. Two Customs officers sustained minor injuries in the arrest action. They were fine after proper treatment and did not need to stay in hospital.

Investigations of the two above-mentioned cases are ongoing. Customs will continue to trace the source and the flow of the illicit cigarettes. The likelihood of further arrests is not ruled out.

Customs will also continue to combat illicit cigarette activities on all fronts through intelligence analysis.

Under the Dutiable Commodities Ordinance, anyone involved in dealing with, possession of, selling or buying illicit cigarettes commits an offence. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a fine of \$1 million and imprisonment for two years.

Members of the public may report any suspected illicit cigarette activities to Customs' 24-hour hotline 2545 6182 or its dedicated crime-reporting email account (crimereport@customs.gov.hk).

HAD distributes complimentary COVID-19 rapid test kits to households, cleansing workers and property management staff in Tai Po, Kwai Tsing, Sha Tin and Kwun Tong Districts

In light of positive test results for the COVID-19 virus from sewage samples collected in Tai Po, Kwai Tsing, Sha Tin and Kwun Tong Districts, the Home Affairs Department (HAD) said today (May 17) that the Tai Po District Office (TPDO), the Kwai Tsing District Office (K&TDO), the Sha Tin District Office (STD0) and the Kwun Tong District Office (KTDO) have distributed a total of about 263 000 COVID-19 rapid test kits to households, cleansing workers and property management staff living and working in the Districts.

The TPDO distributed rapid test kits to households, cleansing workers and property management staff living and working in Dai Nam Building, Tai Wo Centre, Serenity Park I and II, Ting Kok Building, Merit Place, Beautiful Garden, Kai Cheong Mansion, Sheung On Building, Full Scene Garden, Fullview Court, Fuller Gardens, La Fontaine, Greenery Plaza, Evergreen Court, Reve Plaza, Shun King Building, Mei Sun Building, Mei Lee Building, Yuet Fat Mansion, Sing Kung Building, Winnye Tower, Wing Fai Garden, Wing Ming Garden, Fuller Gardens (Phase 2) Cinnamon Court and On Lok Building for voluntary testing through the property management companies and the owners'

corporations. The TPDO also arranged to distribute rapid test kits to households living in "three-nil" buildings in the district of which the sewage samples tested positive.

The K&TDO started to distribute rapid test kits to households, cleansing workers and property management staff living and working in Yau Ming Building, Bank Building, Victory Garden, Cheong Shen Mansion, Cheong Wing Mansion, Kwai Dao Building, Kwai Wah Building, Kwai Loong Building, On Shing Building, Yi Wo Building, Kam Heng Building, Kong Sheng Mansion, Kwai Chung Fa Yuen, Hover Court, Yi Fung Court, Greenknoll Court and Cho Yiu Chuen for voluntary testing through the property management companies and the owners' corporations.

The STD0 distributed rapid test kits to households, cleansing workers and property management staff living and working in Parkview Garden, Granville Garden, Mei Chung Court, Mei Shing Court and Mei Pak Court for voluntary testing through the property management companies. The STD0 also distributed rapid test kits to households living in Heung Fan Liu New Village and Pak Tin Village Section 5 for voluntary testing through the Village Representatives.

In addition, the KTDO distributed rapid test kits to households, cleansing workers and property management staff living and working in Richland Gardens for voluntary testing through the property management company.

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.