

# Statistics for COVID-19 Vaccination Programme

Under the COVID-19 Vaccination Programme which started on February 26, as of 8pm today (March 9), a total of about 8 700 persons received their first dose of the Sinovac vaccine in the past 24 hours, including about 5 500 persons receiving vaccination at eight Community Vaccination Centres, and about 2 800 persons at private doctors and clinics participating in the programme.

The overall percentage of people who booked and received the Sinovac vaccine at the eight community vaccination centres is about 64 per cent today.

So far a cumulative total of about 113 500 persons have received the first dose of vaccination (Annex 1), including about 110 500 persons receiving the Sinovac vaccine and about 3 000 persons receiving the Comirnaty vaccine.

For the past 24 hours ended at 0000 hours today, there were seven cases of ambulance transfer to hospital and all were discharged (Annex 2).

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## Government gazettes compulsory testing notice

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

Currently, in all districts in Hong Kong, if one or more new confirmed cases are found in the residential buildings (including buildings for both commercial and residential uses), or there are sewage samples tested positive which implied possible infection risks, the buildings will be included in the compulsory testing notice.

For testing targeting at workplaces, if one or more confirmed cases are found in a workplace, it will be included in the compulsory testing notice.

Seven buildings fulfilling the above criteria were included in the compulsory testing notice today (March 9).

Details of the compulsory testing notice are as follows:

1. Any person who had been present at any specified premises listed in Part A of Annex 1 for more than two hours at any time during the period from February 24 to March 9, 2021 (including but not limited to visitors, residents and workers), have to undergo testing by March 11, 2021. If persons subject to compulsory testing have previously undergone testing between March 7 and March 9, 2021, they would be taken to have complied with the requirements set out in the compulsory testing notice.
2. Any person who had been engaged to work or had been on duty (including full-time, part-time and relief staff) at any specified premises listed in Part B of Annex 1 at any time during the period from February 24 to March 9, 2021, have to undergo testing by March 11, 2021. If persons subject to compulsory testing have previously undergone testing between March 7 and March 9, 2021, they would be taken to have complied with the requirements set out in the compulsory testing notice.

A spokesman for the Food and Health Bureau reminds the public that in accordance with the compulsory testing notice issued earlier, all household members of close contacts are required to undergo compulsory testing. Any person who had lived with a person who is placed under quarantine pursuant to section 22 of the Prevention and Control of Disease Regulation (Cap. 599A) (person under quarantine) in the same residential unit on the date of commencement of quarantine or during the 14 days before that day, and who becomes aware of the quarantine of the person under quarantine when the relevant quarantine has not yet been completed, have to undergo testing within two days of he/she becoming aware of the person under quarantine has been placed under quarantine and report to the Government the result of the test by phone (at 6275 6901), fax (at 2530 5872) or email (ct@csb.gov.hk) within three days of undergoing the test.

The Government will set up a mobile specimen collection station at Li Sing Street Playground in Sai Ying Pun tomorrow (March 10) for local residents and workers subject to compulsory testing. The service period of the mobile specimen collection station at Carpark of Quarry Bay Community Hall will be extended to March 11 (Thursday). The opening dates and operating hours of the mobile specimen collection stations in various districts providing free COVID-19 nucleic acid testing services for the general public are stated in Annex 2. Apart from mobile specimen collection stations, persons subject to compulsory testing can also choose to attend any of the community testing centres in all districts to receive testing free of charge.

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

1. To visit any of the mobile specimen collection stations (see the list and target groups (if applicable) at [www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/early-testing.html](http://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/early-testing.html)) for testing;

2. To attend any of the community testing centres (see the list at [www.communitytest.gov.hk/en/](http://www.communitytest.gov.hk/en/));
3. To obtain a deep throat saliva specimen collection pack from any of the 121 post offices, vending machines set up at 20 MTR stations or 47 designated general outpatient 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](http://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/early-testing.html));
4. To undergo testing at any of the GOPCs of the Hospital Authority as instructed by a medical professional of the Hospital Authority;
5. To self-arrange testing provided by private laboratories which are recognised by the Department of Health (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](http://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/pdf/List_of_recognised_laboratories_RTPCR.pdf)); or
6. To use a specimen bottle distributed to the relevant specified premises by the Centre for Health Protection (if applicable), and return the specimen bottle with the sample collected as per relevant guidelines.

The spokesman cautioned that testing received at accident and emergency departments of the Hospital Authority or during hospital stays, 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 mobile specimen collection stations or the community testing centres."

Persons subject to compulsory testing must keep the SMS notification containing result of the test for checking by a law enforcement officer when the officer requires the persons to provide information about their undergoing the specified test.

Furthermore, persons subject to testing under the compulsory testing notices should, as far as reasonably practicable, take appropriate personal disease prevention measures including wearing a mask and maintaining hand hygiene, and, unless for the purpose of undergoing the specified test, stay at their place of residence and avoid going out until the test result is ascertained as far as possible.

Any enquiries on compulsory testing arrangements may be addressed to the hotline at 6275 6901, which operates daily from 9am to 6pm. If persons subject to compulsory testing plan to conduct testing at any of the community testing centres, they can check the centre's appointment status in advance. The hotlines of the community testing centres are available at [www.communitytest.gov.hk/en/info/](http://www.communitytest.gov.hk/en/info/).

The Government will continue to trace possibly infected persons who had been to the relevant premises, and seriously verify whether they had complied with the testing notices. Any person who fails to comply with the testing notices commits an offence and may be fined a fixed penalty of \$5,000. The

person would also be issued with a compulsory testing order requiring him or her to undergo testing within a specified time frame. Failure to comply with the order is an offence and the offender would be liable to a fine at level 4 (\$25,000) and imprisonment for six months.

Relevant officers of different government departments are empowered to perform certain functions under the relevant Regulations under the Prevention and Control of Disease Ordinance (Cap. 599), including requesting individuals to provide information and assistance when necessary. Any person who fails to comply with the relevant request commits an offence and would be liable to a fine at level 3 (\$10,000). Collection and use of any personal data for conducting COVID-19 tests must meet the requirements under the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance (Cap. 486). Government departments or testing service providers which handle the relevant information may provide the data to DH or other relevant departments for anti-epidemic purpose as necessary. The workflow does not involve the provision of any personal data to organisations or persons outside Hong Kong.

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 contacted confirmed cases), to undergo testing promptly for early identification of infected persons."

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## **DH received a report of suspected serious adverse event following COVID-19 vaccination**

The Department of Health (DH) announced that as of 4pm (March 9), one report on admission to the intensive care unit (ICU) was received from the Hospital Authority (HA) in the past 24 hours which was a suspected serious adverse event following COVID-19 vaccination.

According to the information provided by the HA, the case involved a 51-year-old man who has history of diabetes, hypertension and hyperlipidaemia. He experienced shortness of breath since March 6 with cough and sputum. He attended the Accident and Emergency Department of Queen Elizabeth Hospital yesterday (March 8) for treatment. He was hospitalised with provisional diagnosis of acute myocardial infarction and was admitted to the ICU last night for further treatment. He is in critical condition. He received a dose of CoronaVac COVID-19 vaccination at Yuen Wo Road Sports Centre Community Vaccination Centre on March 3.

The DH has immediately contacted the HA upon the notification to obtain further information on the incident for conducting investigation and

assessment. The DH will provide the case to the Expert Committee on Clinical Events Assessment Following COVID-19 Immunization for conducting causality assessment, and the assessment result will be released in a timely manner.

According to the product information of the vaccine, patients with uncontrolled severe chronic diseases should not be given the vaccine. For patients with acute diseases, acute exacerbation of chronic diseases, severe chronic diseases, atopy and fever, the vaccine should be used with caution; if necessary, delay vaccination after doctor's evaluation, a DH spokesman urged.

As a whole population, people with acute medical conditions with various severity are admitted to the hospitals every day. With the commencement of the vaccination programme, among those patients with acute medical conditions, there will be those that have received vaccines and reports of such cases might increase with the increasing vaccination uptakes. It is important for the surveillance system in place to monitor these adverse events following COVID-19 vaccination and to conduct causality assessments based on scientific and objective approach to ensure that any untoward outcome would not go unnoticed, the spokesman added.

According to the mortality rates in Hong Kong, on average 10.2 persons, 8.1 persons and 1.4 persons passed away every day respectively due to ischemic heart diseases, cerebrovascular diseases and diabetes in 2019. In addition, according to the information of the HA, in 2020, the number of hospital admission due to myocardial infarction was about 7 300 cases; and the number of hospital admission due to acute ischemic stroke was about 10 300 cases. People with chronic illness should seek medical attention if they feel unwell. They should also adhere to their treatment as prescribed by their doctors.

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## **CHP investigates two suspected food poisoning clusters**

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health is today (March 9) investigating two suspected food poisoning clusters affecting six persons, and reminded the public to maintain personal, food and environmental hygiene to prevent food-borne diseases.

The first cluster involved one male and two females aged 43 and 46, who developed abdominal pain, diarrhea, fever, nausea and vomiting about 35 to 51 hours after having dinner at a restaurant in Mong Kok on March 4.

The other cluster involved three females aged 23 to 26, who developed similar symptoms about 27 to 38 hours after having dinner at the same

restaurant on the same night.

Four of the affected persons sought medical advice and none required hospitalisation. They are in stable condition.

"We have alerted the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department to the incident and investigations are ongoing," a spokesman for the CHP said.

To prevent food-borne diseases, members of the public are reminded to maintain personal, food and environmental hygiene at all times. When dining out:

- Patronise only reliable and licensed restaurants;
- Avoid eating raw seafood;
- Be a discerning consumer in choosing cold dishes, including sashimi, sushi and raw oysters, at a buffet;
- Ensure food is thoroughly cooked before eating during a hot pot or barbecue meal;
- Handle raw and cooked foods carefully and separate them completely during the cooking process;
- Use two sets of chopsticks and utensils to handle raw and cooked food;
- Do not patronise illegal food hawkers;
- Drink boiled water;
- Do not try to use salt, vinegar, wine and wasabi to kill bacteria as they are not effective; and
- Always wash hands before eating and after going to the toilet.

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## **United Christian Hospital announces patient tested positive for COVID-19**

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The spokesperson for United Christian Hospital (UCH) made the following announcement today (March 9) regarding a patient who tested positive for COVID-19:

A 26-year-old male patient was admitted to a Medical Ward on March 3 due to pneumonia and persistent fever, and COVID-19 tests were arranged for him separately on March 3, 5 and 7 with negative results. The patient did not present with cough or sputum. As his pneumonia symptoms did not improve, clinical staff arranged bronchoscopy for him on March 8 to investigate the cause. His bronchoalveolar lavage specimen tested positive for COVID-19. The patient is currently receiving further treatment in an isolation ward with stable condition.

The hospital's infection control team conducted contact tracing

accordingly and 11 patients who stayed in the cubicle or beds nearby are classified as close contacts and will be quarantined. The hospital has arranged viral tests for those who are still staying in the hospital and all of them tested negative. Environmental samples taken from the ward tested negative as well.

All staff members working in the ward concerned were equipped with appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) in accordance with infection control guidelines. No aerosol generating procedures had been performed during that period. All healthcare workers who performed bronchoscopy for the patient wore full PPE according to established guidelines. Therefore, none of the staff members have been classified as close contacts so far, while contact tracing is still underway.

The hospital has arranged thorough cleaning and disinfection of the areas in the Accident and Emergency Department and the ward concerned. UCH will continue to closely monitor the health conditions of its staff and patients and communicate with the Centre for Health Protection about the latest situation.