

# Transcript of remarks by SFH at media session

Following is the transcript of remarks by the the Secretary for Food and Health, Professor Sophia Chan, at a media session this afternoon (January 24) on the compulsory testing in "restricted area":

Reporter: Professor Chan, so far you've got 13 cases out of 7 000 people tested. What do you think of the positive rate? Is it higher or lower than what you expected? And, my second question is many people are wondering what it really means by the lockdown in Jordan. Is it a preparatory exercise for a lockdown of a larger scale or even a citywide lockdown in the future? Can you share with us your thoughts?

Secretary for Food and Health: First of all, about the positive cases or confirmed cases, so far we have identified, out of some 7 000 tests, there are 13 confirmed cases. The positive rate is 0.17 per cent. In fact, if you look at the positive percentage, and if you look at our testing strategy that includes compulsory testing, target group testing and voluntary testing. The overall positive rate is also about 0.17 per cent. So it is similar. Of course, in a small area, we have identified these cases throughout the two days, or one and a half days. We will be analysing the cases in a more detailed fashion. But I think the compulsory testing and also the testing within an area with the restriction of movements are effective in identifying these cases as well as very quickly in detecting and isolating these cases. The close contacts will also be quarantined. So I think this is an effective method in this particular situation.

Reporter: (inaudible)

Secretary for Food and Health: Obviously, we will be reviewing the situation in the cases which the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) has identified. If there is such a need, obviously we do not rule out the possibility of any future operation like this. We would also like to say that currently the issuance of compulsory testing notice is also an effective method in identifying the cases. As you may recall, we have lowered the threshold of issuing compulsory testing notice as well as identifying core area for compulsory testing as well. We will review the cases. We will look at the criteria and consideration including public health considerations and the number of confirmed cases, plus the environmental factors. In this particular situation, the buildings are old, and there are lots of subdivided flats. In addition, there is supplementary information of the sewage study as well as looking at our current (testing) capacity. All these are factors for consideration.

(Please also refer to the Chinese portion of the transcript.)

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## CHP investigates 76 additional confirmed cases of COVID-19

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) announced that as of 0.00am, January 24, the CHP was investigating 76 additional confirmed cases of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), taking the number of cases to 10 086 in Hong Kong so far (comprising 10 085 confirmed cases and one probable case).

Among the newly reported cases announced, four are imported cases.

A total of 798 cases have been recorded in the past 14 days (January 10 to 23), including 759 local cases of which 281 are from unknown sources.

The CHP's epidemiological investigations and relevant contact tracing on the confirmed cases are ongoing. For case details and contact tracing information, please see the Annex or the list of buildings with confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the past 14 days and the latest local situation of COVID-19 available on the website "COVID-19 Thematic Website" ([www.coronavirus.gov.hk](http://www.coronavirus.gov.hk)).

Meanwhile, the CHP reminded those who had visited specified venues under the Prevention and Control of Disease (Compulsory Testing for Certain Persons) Regulation (Cap. 599J) to receive COVID-19 nucleic acid testing according to the compulsory testing notice. The public are also urged to seek medical attention early if symptoms develop.

Regarding the severe epidemic situation, the CHP called on members of the public to avoid going out, having social contact and dining out. They should put on a surgical mask and maintain stringent hand hygiene when they need to go out. The CHP strongly urged the elderly to stay home as far as possible and avoid going out. They should consider asking their family and friends to help with everyday tasks such as shopping for basic necessities.

The spokesman said, "Given that the situation of COVID-19 infection remains severe and that there is a continuous increase in the number of cases reported around the world, members of the public are strongly urged to avoid all non-essential travel outside Hong Kong.

"The CHP also strongly urges the public to maintain at all times strict personal and environmental hygiene, which is key to personal protection against infection and prevention of the spread of the disease in the community. On a personal level, members of the public should wear a surgical mask when having respiratory symptoms, taking public transport or staying in crowded places. They should also perform hand hygiene frequently, especially before touching the mouth, nose or eyes.

"As for household environmental hygiene, members of the public are advised to maintain drainage pipes properly, regularly pour water into drain outlets (U-traps) and cover all floor drain outlets when they are not in use. After using the toilet, they should put the toilet lid down before flushing to avoid spreading germs."

Moreover, the Government has launched the website "COVID-19 Thematic Website" ([www.coronavirus.gov.hk](http://www.coronavirus.gov.hk)) for announcing the latest updates on various news on COVID-19 infection and health advice to help the public understand the latest updates. Members of the public may also gain access to information via the COVID-19 WhatsApp Helpline launched by the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer. Simply by saving 9617 1823 in their phone contacts or clicking the link [wa.me/85296171823?text=hi](https://wa.me/85296171823?text=hi), they will be able to obtain information on COVID-19 as well as the "StayHomeSafe" mobile app and wristband via WhatsApp.

To prevent pneumonia and respiratory tract infections, members of the public should always maintain good personal and environmental hygiene. They are advised to:

- 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;
  - Perform hand hygiene frequently, especially before touching the mouth, nose or eyes, after touching public installations such as handrails or doorknobs, or when hands are contaminated by respiratory secretions after coughing or sneezing;
  - Maintain drainage pipes properly and regularly (about once a week) pour about half a litre of water into each drain outlet (U-trap) to ensure environmental hygiene;
  - Cover all floor drain outlets when they are not in use;
  - After using the toilet, put the toilet lid down before flushing to avoid spreading germs;
  - Wash hands with liquid soap and water, and rub for at least 20 seconds. Then rinse with water and dry with a disposable paper towel. If hand washing facilities are not available, or when hands are not visibly soiled, performing hand hygiene with 70 to 80 per cent alcohol-based handrub is an effective alternative;
  - Cover your mouth and nose with tissue paper when sneezing or coughing. Dispose of soiled tissues into a lidded rubbish bin, then wash hands thoroughly; and
  - When having respiratory symptoms, wear a surgical mask, refrain from work or attending class at school, avoid going to crowded places and seek medical advice promptly.
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# New Territories East Cluster announces a Cluster Facility Management Department staff member tested preliminarily positive for COVID-19

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The spokesperson for the New Territories East Cluster (NTEC) made the following announcement today (January 24) regarding a member of staff in the Cluster Facility Management Department who tested preliminarily positive for COVID-19:

A staff member of the Cluster Facility Management Department of the NTEC developed fever and diarrhoea on Friday (January 22) and attended the Staff Clinic of the Tuen Mun Hospital the next day (January 23). He was subsequently transferred to the Accident & Emergency Department and arranged to undergo a deep throat saliva test. The preliminary test result available last night was positive to COVID-19.

The hospital infection control team conducted contact tracing and noted that the concerned staff's office is located at Shatin Hospital and his last duty day was January 21. He is mainly responsible for clerical duties relating to medical equipment maintenance services and has no contact with patients. He had been wearing surgical masks during work. No patient was identified as a close contact. Four staff members with whom he had meals together were identified as close contacts and they will be quarantined. It was also noted that the staff had attended a meeting at the Prince of Wales Hospital on January 20 and all meeting participants had been wearing surgical masks.

As a precautionary measure, the Cluster has arranged COVID-19 tests for the other 10 participants of the meeting and other staff members of the Department concerned. Test results are pending.

Thorough cleansing and disinfection have been conducted at the office of the staff concerned. The Cluster will continue to closely monitor the health condition of staff and communicate with the Centre for Health Protection on the latest progress.

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# Public hospitals daily update on COVID-19 cases and Kwong Wah Hospital deceased patient

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

As at 9am today (January 24), 35 COVID-19 confirmed patients were discharged from hospital in the last 24 hours. Besides, a patient (case number: 9940) discharged on January 22. Including this patient, a total of 9 034 patients with confirmed or probable infection have been discharged so far.

At present, there are 676 negative pressure rooms in public hospitals with 1 224 negative pressure beds activated. A total of 775 confirmed patients are currently hospitalised in 24 public hospitals and a community treatment facility, among which 35 patients are in critical condition, 35 are in serious condition and the remaining 705 patients are in stable condition. In addition, a 72-year-old male patient (case number: 8449) with chronic illness was admitted to Kwong Wah Hospital on December 24, last year after being tested positive for COVID-19. After treatment, the patient was tested negative for COVID-19 and was released from isolation order by the Department of Health on January 12. His condition continued to deteriorate and he eventually succumbed at 1.40pm today. Including this patient, 165 COVID-19 confirmed patients have passed away in public hospitals so far.

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.

Details of the above-mentioned patients are as follows:

Patient condition	Case numbers
Discharged	6478, 8972, 9023, 9067, 9089, 9090, 9113, 9126, 9229, 9246, 9257, 9308, 9343, 9347, 9350, 9369, 9370, 9379, 9382, 9384, 9408, 9415, 9419, 9436, 9497, 9600, 9716, 9776, 9797, 9804, 9833, 9873, 9889, 9897, 9956
Critical	1989, 3496, 5409, 5511, 5735, 5754, 6125, 6444, 6547, 6607, 6754, 6794, 6913, 7021, 7123, 7259, 7323, 8018, 8078, 8126, 8195, 8221, 8323, 8384, 8452, 8818, 8900, 9049, 9062, 9135, 9267, 9438, 9730, 9884, 9907

Serious	5990, 6232, 6386, 6543, 6824, 6850, 7076,
	7305, 7468, 7653, 7964, 8443, 8819, 8820,
	8832, 9030, 9040, 9045, 9055, 9066, 9166,
	9185, 9240, 9247, 9284, 9404, 9502, 9542,
	9662, 9694, 9766, 9852, 9905, 9959, 10001

## SCS visits colleagues on duty at “restricted area” (with photos)

The Secretary for the Civil Service, Mr Patrick Nip, today (January 24) visited civil service colleagues working in different positions in the compulsory testing operation at the specified "restricted area" in Jordan to give them encouragement.

Mr Nip also visited the Command Centre to learn more about how colleagues monitored the entire operation and make suitable deployment of supplies and manpower.

Mr Nip said, "About 3 000 civil servants from more than a dozen of departments of both the disciplined services and civilian grades participated in the operation.

"These colleagues have worked closely together to perform different tasks, such as patrols, door visits, distribution of supplies, registration or various logistical support.

"The completion of manpower deployment on such a large scale has been done in a very short time and this hinged on the full support of the heads of the departments as well as the dedication of the civil service. At the same time we are also grateful to the co-operation of members of the public, which has demonstrated that the community is united in the fight against the epidemic to achieve the goal of zero cases."





