

## New mobile specimen collection station set up at Kwun Tong Garden Estate

The local COVID-19 epidemic situation is worsening rapidly. The confirmed cases are distributed all over the territory. Some of the confirmed cases are asymptomatic and this indicates the existence of many silent transmission chains in the community. The Government is very concerned about a number of COVID-19 confirmed cases reported recently at Lotus Tower, Kwun Tong Garden Estate, and has arranged for a testing agency to set up a mobile specimen collection station at the following location and dates to provide free testing service for residents and workers in that district:

New mobile specimen collection station	Opening dates (tentative)
Basketball Court of Hung Cheuk Lau, Kwun Tong Garden Estate (only for residents and workers of Kwun Tong Garden Estate) (BGI)	From December 26 until December 30

Operating hours of the abovementioned mobile specimen collection station are from 10am to 8pm. The Government will decide whether it is necessary to extend the operation period of the station after reviewing its usage and public's demand for the testing service.

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 at Annex.

A Government spokesman said, "The testing agencies will provide specimen collection services by combined nasal and throat swabs at the mobile specimen collection stations for testing free of charge. Persons who are subject to compulsory testing and undergo testing at the mobile specimen collection stations will be deemed to have undergone a test at a Community Testing Centre. The mobile specimen collection stations will accord priority to provide testing service for local residents and workers who are subject to compulsory testing."

People whose test results are negative will be informed by SMS through their mobile phones. If any specimen tested shows a preliminarily positive result, the specimen will be referred to the Public Health Laboratory Services Branch of the Department of Health (DH) for a confirmatory test. Confirmed cases will be followed up and announced by the Centre for Health Protection of the DH.

The spokesman urged all individuals who are in doubt about their own

health condition, or individuals with exposure to infection risk (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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## **United Christian Hospital announces a cluster of COVID-19 cases in the Hospital**

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The spokesman of United Christian Hospital (UCH) made an announcement today (December 26) regarding a cluster of COVID-19 cases in the hospital:

Further to the announcement made on December 23 on three inpatients in the Palliative Care and Medical Ward confirmed COVID-19, the hospital's infection control team has kept constant monitoring of the health of staff as well as inpatients in the ward and arranged viral tests for them. In a new round of testing, eight more female patients, aged 20 to 92 year-old, are tested preliminarily positive.

At the same time, an 83-year-old female patient was admitted to the Palliative Care and Medical Ward on December 18. Her viral test result was negative under admission screening. She was transferred to the orthopaedic ward on December 19 and discharged on December 20. She underwent viral testing in the community and was found preliminarily positive for COVID-19 on December 24. All 12 patients are currently under isolation in UCH, apart from one patient who is in critical condition, all others are in stable condition.

Regarding the cluster of COVID-19 cases in Palliative Care and Medical Ward, the hospital has arranged ward staff and other staff who have visited the ward to undergo COVID-19 tests. So far, 195 staff have been tested and a total of seven staff are tested preliminarily positive, including four nurses, one phlebotomist, one patient healthcare assistant and one contract-out cleaner. They are all transferred to the isolation ward in UCH and are in stable condition. Test results of other staff members are negative and related tests are still ongoing. The hospital infection control team is conducting contact tracing for these colleagues.

The hospital has arranged thorough cleansing and disinfection of the ward, as precautionary measures, apart from suspending compassionate visit earlier, the hospital stepped up the following infection control measures:

1. Suspend ward admission;

2. Suspend patient transfer to other wards or hospitals;
3. Stop baseline staff movement to other wards;
4. Apply stringent contact and droplet precautions;
5. Arrange repeat testing for patients and staff concerned within a particular timeframe;
6. Arrange accommodation within hospital premises for affected staff

A team of experts including Professor Yuen Kwok-yung, Chair Professor of the Department of Microbiology, University of Hong Kong and Dr Raymond Lai, Hospital Authority Chief Infection Control Officer had paid a visit to UCH this afternoon. Professor Yuen reviewed patients and staff cases, the workflow of the ward and hospital's infection control measures and commented that the infection control measures in UCH are appropriate.

Professor Yuen believed that the confirmed cases in the hospital is related to a super-spreader who are infected within the community. Besides, patients in the Palliative Care and Medical Ward have terminal illness, poor immune system and some already have severe organ failure. Patients with terminal illness may also have difficulty in breathing and hence poor mask compliance, causing further spreading of the virus.

Professor Yuen suggested that healthcare staff should put on eye protection during mouth care or feeding for patients. Although the patient's admission screening showed negative results, it is possible that it was during the incubation period. He suggested the hospital to perform another viral test for patients who show chest infections or those with worsening symptoms. He also suggested that the hospital should enhance ventilation facilities inside the ward.

The hospital immediately enhanced the infection control of respective caring procedures and reminded clinicians to arrange another viral tests for patients whose clinical conditions worsened in view of the experts' advice. The hospital has already installed air purifiers with HEPA filters inside the ward and will carefully examine the recommendations of the experts and to introduce other improvement measures.

As for the orthopedic ward case, seven female patients who were located near the confirmed patient were classified as close contacts after contact tracing. Among which, two of them were discharged and will be followed up by the Centre for Health Protection. According to the initial investigation, the staff members working in the concerned ward were equipped with appropriate personal protective equipment in accordance with infection control guidelines. No aerosol generating procedures had been performed during that period. Therefore, none of the staff members is being classified as close contacts so far, while contact tracing is still underway. The hospital has arranged tests for the patients and the staff members. So far the test results are negative. Admission to this ward has also been suspended with immediate effect and thorough cleansing and disinfection of the ward were arranged.

UCH will continue to closely monitor the health of the staff and patients and communicate with the CHP about the latest situation.

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## **CE inspects enforcement of measures to prevent imported cases at airport and construction works for temporary hospital (with photos/video)**

The Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, today (December 26) visited Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA) to inspect the implementation and enforcement of quarantine measures for inbound travellers by various departments. She then proceeded to the temporary hospital that is under construction on a piece of land adjacent to AsiaWorld-Expo to learn more about the progress of works.

Accompanied by the Secretary for Food and Health, Professor Sophia Chan; the Secretary for Transport and Housing, Mr Frank Chan Fan; and the Chief Executive Officer of the Airport Authority Hong Kong, Mr Fred Lam, Mrs Lam visited the HKIA Midfield Concourse, which has been used as a place to carry out various checks and virus tests on inbound travellers. She was briefed by the staff members of the Department of Health's Port Health Division on the quarantine procedures handled centrally there, including arranging for inbound travellers to undergo COVID-19 swab tests and wait for negative nucleic acid test results there before being transferred to designated hotels. Mrs Lam noted that the testing agency, BGI, has set up a temporary laboratory at the airport recently to carry out rapid nucleic acid tests for inbound travellers, thereby significantly shortening their waiting time for test results and reducing the risk of infection brought about by the long waiting time.

"I have inspected the anti-epidemic arrangements at the airport many times during the pandemic to ensure that we guard the line of defence at this port which connects to overseas places to the best of our ability to reduce the risk of the importation of the virus under the high risk posed by the global epidemic. Over the past year, various units have consolidated their experience and made improvements continuously to implement a series of enhanced measures at the airport to plug the loopholes in every area, while bearing in mind the need to provide better services for passengers. I thank the Airport Authority Hong Kong for its full support and the continuous hard work of staff members working at the airport for their contributions to the prevention of the importation of cases," Mrs Lam said.

Next, Mrs Lam and the other officials as well as the Secretary for

Development, Mr Michael Wong, visited the temporary hospital, which is under construction on a piece of land adjacent to AsiaWorld-Expo, to inspect the progress of works. Following the completion and commissioning of the community treatment facility at AsiaWorld-Expo in early October, the temporary hospital is another significant project supported by the Central Government and implemented by the Guangdong Provincial Government as well as the Shenzhen Municipal Government to help in Hong Kong's fight against the virus.

Mrs Lam said she was pleased to note that construction of the temporary hospital, which has adopted the technology of modular integrated construction, has been making good progress. The project was topped out last month and can be handed over to the Hospital Authority in late January next year to prepare for commissioning. The temporary hospital can accommodate over 800 beds in negative pressure wards and related medical facilities.

"I express my gratitude to the construction team and thousands of staff members of China State Construction for their hard work day and night to contribute to the fight against the virus. The temporary hospital will significantly enhance our capability to respond to the epidemic, while the new technologies introduced during the hospital construction project are of great reference value for our works in future," Mrs Lam said.

Mrs Lam also thanked the staff members on the site and extended her holiday greetings to them. She said she hoped to visit the site again next month to witness the completion of the project.



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## [CE visits MTR Siu Ho Wan Depot development project site \(with photos/video\)](#)

Accompanied by the Secretary for Transport and Housing, Mr Frank Chan Fan, and the Secretary for Development, Mr Michael Wong, the Chief Executive, Mrs Carrie Lam, today (December 26) visited the Siu Ho Wan Depot of the MTR Corporation Limited (MTRCL) and was briefed by the Chairman of the board of directors of the MTRCL, Dr Rex Auyeung, and the MTRCL's Chief Executive Officer, Dr Jacob Kam, as well as other representatives of the MTRCL on the future housing development plan there.

Mrs Lam announced in her 2020 Policy Address that the Outline Zoning Plan for the Siu Ho Wan Depot site topside development of the MTRCL had been drawn up and that, based on the latest assessment, it is expected that the site may provide about 20 000 residential units in the medium to long term, of which around 50 per cent will be public housing. This is going to be the second topside public housing project above railway facilities since the Kornhill development on the Island Line four decades ago in the 1980s, demonstrating the current-term Government's determination in expanding public housing supply. Compared to the Kornhill development project, in which public housing only accounted for about a quarter of the units of the entire project, the Siu Ho Wan Depot development will offer a larger proportion of public housing, which will account for about half of the total supply. The first 6 000 or so public and private housing flats are expected to take in residents from 2030 onwards.

Mrs Lam said, "Housing is the crux of the many problems faced by Hong Kong, and the core of the housing problem lies in the shortage of land for housing development. In addition to pressing ahead with the eight land supply options recommended by the Task Force on Land Supply, the current-term Government has also comprehensively reviewed the use of existing public facilities to implement the 'single site, multiple use' development model.

"The 30-hectare Siu Ho Wan Depot site has great potential for development through innovative planning. Undoubtedly, pursuing topside development at this operating depot poses considerable technical challenges. I thank the MTRCL for conducting a large amount of preparatory work to take forward the project. The relevant departments will provide full support in a bid to facilitate the commencement of the works of the project as soon as possible, thereby further increasing the supply of public housing in the future.

"Indeed, our efforts over the years in increasing housing supply have started to pay off. As I announced earlier, the Government has identified 330

hectares of land required for providing 316 000 public housing units to meet the demand for public housing units in the coming 10 years as stated in the Long Term Housing Strategy Annual Progress Report 2020. That land has not included the Siu Ho Wan Depot development project."

Mrs Lam encouraged the MTRCL to continue its efforts to explore more railway land for housing development through innovative thinking, combining people's needs for housing and commuting. She also said she was pleased to note that the MTRCL will adopt the latest technology for the relocation of the depot to meet the needs of the operation of railway services in the future.



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## [Correctional officer of Lo Wu Correctional Institution preliminarily tests positive for COVID-19](#)

The Lo Wu Correctional Institution this evening (December 26) learned that a correctional officer has preliminarily tested positive for coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

The staff member took leave from December 13 to 22. On the first day of resumption of duty (December 23), she was arranged to undergo COVID-19 testing. While performing duty this evening, she was notified by the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health to have preliminarily tested positive for COVID-19. The staff member has no recent travel history. She has been wearing surgical masks when performing duties and has properly maintained social distancing with people she has had contact with. Her body temperature was normal when undergoing temperature screening at work and she did not have any symptoms.

The Correctional Services Department (CSD) has liaised with the CHP and followed the advice given which includes arranging COVID-19 testing for all persons in custody and staff of the institution as well as thorough cleaning

and disinfection of the locations concerned.

The CSD is highly concerned about the COVID-19 epidemic and has remained highly vigilant. Relevant hygienic measures for prevention of infectious diseases have been strictly implemented in accordance with the established mechanism. In addition, a series of disease prevention and disinfection measures have been put in place, including requiring staff members to check body temperatures and wear masks before and when performing duties. All working locations in the institution also undergo cleaning and disinfection regularly. The persons in custody and staff members are also reminded by the management to have a medical consultation promptly if they have any symptoms.