

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.)