

Tuen Mun Hospital announced follow up for a confirmed novel coronavirus patient

The following is issued on behalf of the Hospital Authority:

The spokesperson for Tuen Mun Hospital (TMH) made the following announcement today (January 25) regarding the treatment process of a patient infected with novel coronavirus:

The 62-year-old female patient went to TMH for consultation at about 8.30pm on January 23, accompanied by her daughter and son-in-law. The triage nurse enquired about her medical and travel history. Given a travel history of Wuhan and fever, the nurse then arranged the patient and companions to wait for doctor's consultation in the area nearby dedicated to handling patients suspected of infectious disease.

A doctor consulted the patient at around 10pm. There were two other patients, who were suspected of infectious disease, occupying the negative pressure isolation room and another consultation room with separate ventilation system in the Accident and Emergency Department at that time. The duty staff then arranged the family of three to the trauma room for further clinical assessment. Upon clinical assessment, the patient was required to be admitted to a negative pressure isolation ward at 12 midnight.

TMH was notified by the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) on January 24 that the patient was confirmed to be infected with novel coronavirus. The patient was transferred to the Hospital Authority Infectious Disease Centre in Princess Margaret Hospital for hospitalisation. Her accompanying daughter and son-in-law were regarded as close contacts by the CHP and currently under quarantine at the isolation camp.

The Hospital Infection Control Officer also followed up and reviewed the patient treatment process. It was noted that the trauma room in which the patient received consultation was not a negative pressure room, while the female patient was confirmed to have worn a surgical mask throughout the consultation. In addition, the Accident and Emergency staff who came into contact with the patient concerned were equipped with appropriate personal protective equipment.

Trauma rooms are generally used to handle major trauma cases, for example, traffic accident injuries. The trauma room is not a negative pressure room while the door is closed most of the time. There is an x-ray patient waiting area outside the trauma room.

The Hospital Authority (HA) and TMH are very concerned about the incident. The HA Chief Infection Control Officer and experts from the CHP

joined the hospital at a meeting to conduct risk assessment of the incident. They concurred that since the door of the concerned trauma room was closed most of the time, people staying in the x-ray patient waiting area should not be at high risk of infection. After the risk assessment of all those who have passed by or stayed in the area, 11 patients and a male security guard were identified as close contacts and required to be quarantined. The patients included four men and seven women (aged 18 to 88). Five of them were still hospitalised in TMH for treatment under isolation. The remaining patients and their accompanying persons will be followed up by the CHP.

Regarding environmental hygiene, the Accident and Emergency Department of TMH performs routine cleansing and disinfection every day. Cleansing will also be performed for the trauma room after use every time in accordance with the prevailing procedure.

The incident has been reported to HA Head Office and the CHP. The hospital apologised for not arranging the patient in a negative pressure room for consultation, causing other people on site being exposed to infection risks. The hospital would remind staff about the infection control guidelines and arrangements for to prevent a recurrence of the incident.

TMH will continue to closely work with CHP to follow up with the condition of the patients.