

本署檔號 Our Ref. : (135) in DH SEB CD/8/6/1 Pt.32

December 20, 2016

Dear Principal / Person-in-charge,

A Confirmed Imported Case of Human Infection with Avian Influenza A(H7N9) Virus

I would like to draw your attention to the first confirmed imported case of human infection with avian influenza A(H7N9) virus in Hong Kong this winter affecting an 75-year-old man.

The patient, with underlying illnesses, travelled to Changping, Dongguan alone from on November 28 and attended a hospital there for chest discomfort on December 8. He returned to Hong Kong via Lo Wu on December 9 and was directly admitted to North District Hospital by ambulance for cough with sputum, shortness of breath, runny nose and chest discomfort. His nasopharyngeal swab tested positive for enterovirus/ rhinovirus and negative for influenza virus upon laboratory testing by the Public Health Laboratory Services Branch (PHLSB) of the Centre for Health Protection (CHP). The patient subsequently developed fever on December 17 and the clinical diagnosis was pneumonia. His nasopharyngeal aspirate collected on December 19 was confirmed to be positive for influenza A(H7N9) virus by the PHLSB on the same day. He is now in serious condition and is under isolation and further management.

The patient had visited wet market in Dongguan. His home contacts have remained asymptomatic so far and have been put under medical surveillance. Tracing of his other contacts is underway.

This is the 17th imported human case of avian influenza A(H7N9) infection confirmed in Hong Kong. From 2013 to date, 783 human cases of avian influenza A(H7N9) infection have been reported by the Mainland health authorities.



To prevent avian influenza and other respiratory illnesses, please kindly remind your students / staff to observe strict hand hygiene, avoid touching their mouth, nose or eyes and **avoid visiting wet markets with live poultry or contacting poultry** especially when travelling to affected areas of avian influenza. Besides, they should wash hands frequently with liquid soap, especially before handling food or eating, after going to toilet,

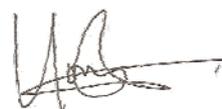
or when hands are dirtied by respiratory secretion after coughing or sneezing. In addition, the following measures are also advised:

- Avoid touching poultry/birds/animals or their droppings;
- Wash hands thoroughly with liquid soap and water immediately in case of contact with poultry/birds/animals or their droppings;
- Build up good body resistance and have a healthy lifestyle. This can be achieved through a balanced diet, regular exercise, adequate rest, reducing stress and no smoking;
- Cook poultry and eggs thoroughly before eating;
- Maintain good environmental hygiene;
- Maintain good indoor ventilation;
- Avoid going to crowded places with poor ventilation if feeling unwell; and
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces, furniture, commonly shared items and floor at least daily by using appropriate disinfectant. For non-metallic surface, disinfect with 1 part of household bleach in 99 parts of water, wait until dry and then rinse with water. For metallic surface, disinfect with 70% alcohol.

Students / staff with recent history of contact with poultry or history of visiting wet markets with live poultry in affected areas of avian influenza should wear a mask and consult doctors promptly if they have respiratory symptoms, and inform the doctor of their exposure history. The affected students / staff should avoid returning to the school. You may wish to note that the CHP has issued '*Guidelines on Prevention of Communicable Diseases*' and '*Management of Avian Influenza in Schools*' for schools, which can be accessed at http://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/guidelines_on_prevention_of_communicable_diseases_in_schools_kindergartens_kindergartens_cum_child_care-centres_child_care_centres.pdf and http://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/management_ai_school_eng.pdf respectively.

If you notice any increase in respiratory illnesses or absenteeism among your students or staff, please report to our Central Notification Office (Tel: 2477 2772; Fax: 2477 2770) for immediate epidemiological investigations and outbreak control. Further information on avian influenza is available at the CHP website (http://www.chp.gov.hk/en/view_content/24244.html).

Yours faithfully,



(Dr. Yonnie Lam)

for Controller, Centre for Health Protection
Department of Health