

本署檔號 Our Ref. : (198) in DH SEB CD/8/6/1 Pt.34

January 11, 2017

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 forth confirmed case of human infection with avian influenza A(H7N9) virus in Hong Kong this winter affecting a 10-year-old boy.

The patient, with good past health, has developed fever, cough and vomiting on January 8. He attended the Accident and Emergency Department of North Lantau Hospital and was referred to Princess Margaret Hospital (PMH) for admission on January 9. The patient has been in stable condition all along. His nasopharyngeal aspirate specimen was preliminarily tested positive for influenza A(H7) virus by PMH on January 10. Another nasopharyngeal aspirate specimen taken on January 11 was confirmed to be positive for influenza A(H7N9) virus by the Public Health Laboratory Services Branch of the Centre for Health Protection (CHP). He is currently isolated in PMH.

Enquiries revealed that the patient and his family travelled to Foshan, Guangdong between December 31, 2016 and January 3, 2017. During their stay in the Mainland, the patient visited a relative's home where a few live chickens were kept. The family had also visited a market there but denied entry into its poultry section. His family members have remained asymptomatic so far and have been put under medical surveillance. Tracing of his other contacts is underway.

This is the 20th human case of avian influenza A(H7N9) infection confirmed in Hong Kong. From 2013 to date, 902 human cases of avian influenza A(H7N9) infection have been reported by the Mainland health authorities, 127 of which have been recorded from November 2016 thus far. The activity of avian influenza is expected to increase in winter based on its seasonal pattern.



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. SK CHUANG)
for Controller, Centre for Health Protection
Department of Health