

本署檔號 Our Ref. : (13) in DH CDB/9/12/6 Pt.1

January 9, 2020

Dear Principal / Person-in-charge,

Latest Progress on the Cluster of Pneumonia Cases in Wuhan

Further to our letter dated January 6, 2020, we would like to update you on the latest progress of the identification of the pathogen for the reported cluster of pneumonia cases in Wuhan, Hubei Province (湖北省武漢市).

According to information from the National Health Commission (NHC), the Mainland's expert group has preliminarily determined that the pathogen of the cluster of viral pneumonia cases occurring in Wuhan is a kind of novel coronavirus. The relevant Mainland laboratory has detected a novel coronavirus and obtained the whole genome sequence of the virus. Further testing of samples is ongoing to assist in confirmation of the pathogen. For the latest information on "Severe Respiratory Disease associated with a Novel Infectious Agent, please refer to the designated webpage of the Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health: <https://www.chp.gov.hk/en/features/102465.html>.

The Mainland and Hong Kong are now amid the winter influenza season and there is extensive travel especially with the approaching Lunar New Year holidays, persons aged 6 months or above (except those with known contraindications) are advised to receive seasonal influenza vaccination before travelling for personal protection. Students and staff should always maintain good personal and environmental hygiene to prevent pneumonia and respiratory tract infection:

- Perform hand hygiene frequently, especially before touching the mouth, nose or eyes; after touching public installations such as handrails or door knobs; or when hands are contaminated by respiratory secretion after coughing or sneezing.
- Wash hands with liquid soap and water, and rub for at least 20 seconds. Then rinse with water and dry with a disposable paper towel or hand dryer. If hand washing facilities are not available, or when hands are not visibly soiled, hand hygiene with 70 to 80 per cent alcohol-based handrub



is an effective alternative.

- Cover mouth and nose with tissue paper when sneezing or coughing. Dispose of soiled tissues into a lidded rubbish bin, then wash hands thoroughly.
- When having respiratory symptoms, wear a surgical mask, refrain from work or attending class at school, avoid going to crowded places and seek medical advice promptly.
- Avoid making close contact with patients, especially those with symptoms of acute respiratory infections.
- Avoid touching animals (including game), poultry / birds or their droppings.
- Avoid visiting wet markets, live poultry markets or farms.
- Do not consume game meat and do not patronize food premises where game meat is served.
- Adhere to food safety and hygiene rules such as avoiding consuming raw or undercooked animal products, including milk, eggs and meat, or foods which may be contaminated by animal secretions, excretions (such as urine) or contaminated products, unless they have been properly cooked, washed or peeled.

For prevention measures, please visit the CHP's pages below for more information:

- Webpage on Personal Hygiene
(<https://www.chp.gov.hk/en/healthtopics/content/460/19899.html>)
- Video on "Prevent diseases · Maintain good hygiene"
(<https://youtu.be/X0OxrsgAP2w>)

Please draw the attention of the students and staff in your school to the above. Thank you for your ongoing support in combating communicable diseases.

Yours faithfully,



(Dr. SK Chuang)

for Controller, Centre for Health Protection
Department of Health