



中華人民共和國香港特別行政區政府總部教育局
Education Bureau

Government Secretariat, The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
The People's Republic of China

本局檔號 Our Ref.: (131) in EDB(COA)ADM/60/1/1(8)

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3 April 2013

To: Supervisors/Principals of all Schools

Dear Supervisor/Principal,

**Stay Vigilant to Guard against Communicable Diseases
Avian Influenza (H7N9)**

According to the latest surveillance data of the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH), there were several confirmed cases of Avian Influenza (H7N9) identified in Mainland China. In view of the increasing public concern about issues and risks related to the disease, CHP of DH has today issued a letter to advise schools to stay vigilant against the disease and to put in place preventive and control measures. A copy of the relevant letter is enclosed at the Appendix for your reference.

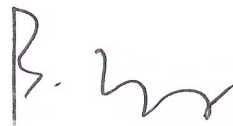
As the Easter holidays are coming to an end, we would like to remind schools to put in place various preventive and control measures against communicable diseases before the holidays end, by making reference to our letter issued to all schools on 29 August 2012. Students and staff who develop symptoms of fever or influenza-like illness should avoid returning to the school and they should seek medical advice early. Schools are also reminded to enlist parents' co-operation in paying attention to students' personal hygiene and environmental hygiene so as to tie in with the preventative measures taken by school.

Schools may also refer to the "[Guidelines on Prevention of Communicable Diseases in Schools/ Kindergartens/ Kindergarten cum Child Care Centres/ Child Care Centres](#)" as posted in our website for further details. The Guidelines and the letter of 29 August 2012 can be accessed via the following path: *EDB Homepage (www.edb.gov.hk) > School Administration and Management > Administration > About School > Prevention of Communicable Diseases in Schools > A. Latest Information*

In addition, CHP in collaboration with the Education Bureau (EDB), will organize health talks for schools on the prevention and control of communicable diseases at the end of April 2013. Details of these health talks will be announced shortly.

EDB will continue to keep in close contact with CHP and release the latest information on communicable diseases to schools. For enquiries, please contact your respective Senior School Development Officers/Senior Services Officers.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. Yung', is positioned above the printed name.

(Benjamin YUNG)

for Secretary for Education

監測及流行病學處

保障市民健康
Protecting Hong Kong's healthSurveillance
And
Epidemiology
Branch

本署權號 Our Ref. : (65) in DH SEB CD/8/6/1 Pt.27

3 April, 2013

Dear Principal / Person in charge,

**Human Infection of Avian Influenza (H7N9) in
Mainland China**

I would like to draw your attention to three confirmed cases of avian influenza (H7N9) in Shanghai and Anhui Province, notified by the National Health and Family Planning Commission on 31 March, 2013, and another four cases of avian influenza (H7N9) confirmed by Jiangsu Health Department on 2 April.

The two cases in Shanghai were two men aged 87 and 27, who passed away on March 4 and 10 respectively. As regard to the case in Anhui Province, the 35-year-old female patient is now in critical condition. Laboratory tests on the patients' specimens by the Mainland health authorities yielded positive results for influenza A (H7N9). According to the National Health and Family Planning Commission, the 27-year-old man was a butcher while the 35-year-old woman had exposure history to poultry before the onset of symptoms. All three cases had clinical symptoms of respiratory infection such as fever, cough and progression to severe pneumonia and breathing difficulty. No epidemiological link among the three cases was identified. So far, no abnormality was detected among the 88 close contacts of the three cases.

In addition, the four cases in Jiangsu Province were one man and three women whose ages ranged from 32 to 83. All of them are now in critical condition. Laboratory tests on the patients' specimens by the Mainland health authorities yielded positive results for influenza A (H7N9). According to Jiangsu Health Department, the 45-year-old female patient was a poultry worker. All of them presented with respiratory tract infection with progression to severe pneumonia. No epidemiological link among the four cases was identified. So far, no abnormality was detected among the 167 close contacts of the four cases.



衛生防護中心乃衛生署
轄下執行疾病預防
及控制的專業架構
The Centre for Health
Protection is a
professional arm of the
Department of Health for
disease prevention and
control

In Hong Kong, influenza A (H7) is a statutorily notifiable infectious disease. So far, no human cases of influenza A (H7N9) infection were recorded in Hong Kong. The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) is maintaining close liaison with the Mainland health authorities to obtain more information on the cases and a series of prevention and control measures have also been put in place to safeguard public health.

According to the latest information, influenza A (H7N9) is one type of avian influenza viruses. It is believed that people may become infected through close contact with infected birds and poultry or their droppings. Similar to other avian influenza viruses, H7 virus infection in humans is uncommon. Illness in humans may also include conjunctivitis and/or upper respiratory tract symptoms.

To prevent avian influenza, the following measures are advised:

- Avoid touching poultry, birds or their droppings, because infected poultry, birds or their droppings may carry the avian influenza virus;
- Wash hands thoroughly with liquid soap and water immediately in case of contact with poultry, birds or their droppings;
- Keep hands clean and wash hands properly, especially before touching eyes, nose and mouth;
- Cover nose and mouth while sneezing or coughing. Dispose sputum or secretions wrapped in tissue paper into rubbish bins with lids. Wash hands with liquid soap and water afterwards;
- 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;
- Poultry and eggs should be thoroughly cooked before eating;
- Maintain good environmental hygiene;
- Maintain good indoor ventilation;
- Avoid crowded places with poor ventilation if feeling unwell; and
- Seek medical advice if fever or respiratory symptoms develop.

Children/ staff who develop symptoms of fever or influenza-like illness should seek medical advice early. The affected children/ staff should avoid returning to the school.

If you notice any increase in respiratory illnesses or absenteeism among your children or staff, please report to our Central Notification Office (Tel: 2477 2772; Fax: 2477 2770) for immediate epidemiological investigations and outbreak control.

More information on avian Influenza is available at CHP website (<http://www.chp.gov.hk>).

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'SK CHUANG', written in a cursive style.

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