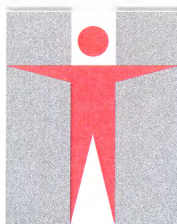


香港特別行政區政府  
衛生署  
香港灣仔皇后大道東 213 號  
胡忠大廈 17 樓及 21 樓



THE GOVERNMENT OF THE HONG KONG  
SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGION  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
WU CHUNG HOUSE, 17<sup>TH</sup> & 21<sup>ST</sup> FLOORS,  
213 QUEEN'S ROAD EAST,  
WAN CHAI, HONG KONG

本署檔號 Our Ref.: (60) in DHHQ/1055/30/6 Pt. 10

來函檔號 Your Ref.:

電話 Tel.: (852) 2961 8914

圖文傳真 Fax: (852) 2573 9213

13 March 2020

Dear health professionals,

### **Updated Situation of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)**

Further to our letter on 3 March 2020, we would like to provide you an update on the development of coronavirus disease-19 (COVID-19).

On 11 March 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the situation of COVID-19 as a pandemic because of the alarming levels of spread and severity of cases around the world. According to WHO, there were more than 118,000 cases in 114 countries, and 4,291 deaths. It was expected that the number of cases, deaths and affected countries would climb even higher in the days and weeks ahead.

In Hong Kong, in view of the health risks arising from the outbreaks of the COVID-19 in more countries/ regions overseas, the Government has issued the Red Outbound Travel Alert on the entire Italy, France (Bourgogne-Franche-Comte and Grand Est), Germany (North Rhine-Westphalia), Spain (La Rioja, Madrid and Pais Vasco) and Japan (Hokkaido) on 10 March 2020. Health quarantine arrangements on inbound travelers arriving from these countries/ regions has been strengthened accordingly.

Moreover, the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) has further extended the Enhanced Laboratory Surveillance Programme to cover all

*We build a healthy Hong Kong and  
aspire to be an internationally renowned public health authority*

private clinics and hospitals so that cases of COVID-19 can be identified early in order to minimise the risk of community transmission. The Public Health Laboratory Services Branch (PHLSB) of the CHP will provide free RT-PCR test on COVID-19 virus for private doctors.

If a patient is confirmed to have positive test result, CHP will arrange admission to a public hospital for isolation and further management. Epidemiological investigation and contact tracing will commence. The extent of contact tracing will be made on a case-by-case basis. Close contacts will be put quarantine and other contacts will be put under medical surveillance. In general, persons who have face-to-face interaction for 15 minutes or more with a case who did not wear a surgical mask will be classified as close contacts. Healthcare workers/ clinic staff who have worn adequate personal protection equipment (PPE) will **not** be considered as contacts in general. As a usual practice, the name and district of the building of the clinic (may include the name of the clinic) will be disclosed if it has been visited by a confirmed case from 2 days before onset of symptoms.

We would like to remind healthcare workers to remain vigilant when serving patients/clients with recent travel history outside Hong Kong, especially with history of travelling countries/ regions with active community transmission of COVID-19. Please advise them to seek medical advice promptly if they have fever or respiratory symptoms, and to inform the doctor of their recent travel history and any contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19. The list of places with active community transmission of COVID-19 is available on the CHP website ([https://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/statistics\\_of\\_the\\_cases\\_novel\\_coronaviruses\\_infection\\_en.pdf](https://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/statistics_of_the_cases_novel_coronaviruses_infection_en.pdf)) which will be updated daily.

In addition, healthcare workers are reminded to adhere strictly to infection prevention and control measures when serving patients/ clients at your hospital/ clinic. Please also note the updated clarification on the use of N95 respirator on the relevant interim guidelines as appropriate:

- Recommended Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) in hospitals/ clinics under Serious/ Emergency Response Level Coronavirus disease

*We build a healthy Hong Kong and  
aspire to be an internationally renowned public health authority*

(COVID-19) (Interim)

[https://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/recommended\\_ppe\\_for\\_nid\\_eng.pdf](https://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/recommended_ppe_for_nid_eng.pdf)

- Key Elements on Prevention and Control of Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in Healthcare Settings (Interim)

[https://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/ic\\_advice\\_for\\_nid\\_in\\_healthcare\\_setting.pdf](https://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/ic_advice_for_nid_in_healthcare_setting.pdf)

Please share the above messages with your colleagues/ staff working in your institution. For the latest information on COVID-19, please visit <https://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/index.html> .

Thank you very much for your support.

Yours sincerely,



(Dr Kellie SO)  
for Director of Health