

本署檔號 Our Ref. : (6) in DH SEB CD/8/93/1 Pt.7

8 June 2015

Dear Principal/ Person-in-charge,

**Activation of Serious Response Level of Government's
Preparedness Plan for Middle East Respiratory Syndrome**

Further to our letter dated 1 June 2015, we would like to update you on the situation of Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) in Korea, and draw your attention to the activation of the Serious Response Level of Hong Kong Government's Preparedness Plan for MERS.

According to information from the relevant health authorities, a total of 86 laboratory-confirmed cases of MERS have been identified in Korea so far (as of June 8). In addition, another case was exported from Korea to Mainland China. Among them, six fatal cases have been recorded.

In view of the increasing number of cases and the large number of persons potentially exposed to these cases, the frequent travel of people between Korea and Hong Kong and the dense population in Hong Kong, and the capacity of the local health care system, the Government decided to raise the response level under the Preparedness Plan for the MERS from Alert to Serious on 8 June. The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) has extended the reporting criteria of MERS to anyone who have travelled to the MERS affected areas including Middle East and Korea and present with fever or have unexplained clinical feature(s) of lower respiratory tract infection etc.

We would like to remind you to remain vigilant against MERS, and remind your staff or students/children to avoid unnecessary travel to Korea, in particular, those with chronic illnesses. As the summer vacation is approaching, we appeal to schools to avoid arranging students to participate in study tours in Korea and to make the above appeal to parents and students. Travellers in Korea and the Middle-East should avoid unnecessary visit to healthcare facilities. Travellers in the Middle-East should avoid going to farms, barns or markets with camels, and



avoid contact with sick persons and animals, especially camels, birds or poultry. For more information about the latest development, please visit the website of CHP at http://www.chp.gov.hk/en/view_content/26511.html. Please be reminded to take heed of personal, food and environmental hygiene:

- Do not consume raw or undercooked animal products, including milk and meat, or foods which may be contaminated by animal secretions, excretions (such as urine) or products, unless they have been properly cooked, washed or peeled;
- Seek medical consultation immediately if feeling unwell;
- Avoid visits to health-care settings with MERS patients;
- Wash hands before touching the eyes, nose and mouth, and after sneezing, coughing or cleaning the nose; and
- Wash hands before eating or handling food, and after using the toilet.

You may wish to note that the CHP has issued guidelines to school on prevention of MERS which can be accessed at:

(http://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/advice_to_school_on_prevention_of_middle_east_respiratory_infection.pdf).

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in dark red ink, appearing to read 'Chuang Shuk-kwan', is written over a light blue rectangular background.

(Dr. Chuang Shuk-kwan)
for Controller, Centre for Health Protection
Department of Health