

本署檔號 Our Ref. : (123) in DH SEB CD/8/6/1 Pt.27

28 January 2014

Dear Medical Superintendent,

**Live poultry imported from Mainland tested positive
for H7 avian influenza virus**

Further to our letter to you dated 21 January 2014, I would like to draw your attention to the report that a number of samples from a batch of live chicken imported from a registered poultry farm in Shunde District of Foshan City of Guangdong Province were confirmed H7 positive by H7 Polymerase Chain Reaction test (genetic test) on 27 January 2014. This batch of chicken had not yet been released to the retailed markets. The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has declared the Cheung Sha Wan Temporary Wholesale Poultry Market as an infected place. All of the some 20 000 live poultry in the market will be culled. The market has also been closed for 21 days until 18 February for thorough disinfection and cleansing. During the closure period, trading of live poultry (including Mainland and local live poultry) will be suspended. The Government has notified the relevant Mainland authorities for tracing the exact source of infection. The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) has put the wholesalers and workers of the Man Kam To Animal Inspection Station and Cheung Sha Wan Temporary Wholesale Poultry Market who might have been exposed to this batch of chicken under medical surveillance.

Since the occurrence of H7N9 avian influenza cases in the Mainland in March last year, Hong Kong has been on high alert and carried out measures to safeguard against the disease. Starting from last April, H7 genetic tests on imported live poultry at the boundary control point have been conducted and more than 14 000 samples have been tested since then and they were all negative for H5 and H7 viruses. It is the first time that H7 virus was found in imported poultry in Hong Kong.



In accordance with the Preparedness Plan for Influenza Pandemic on the Serious Response Level, the Government has adopted corresponding contingency measures to prevent the virus from spreading in the community and safeguard public

health. Among others, the DH will enhance surveillance to detect any potential human cases.

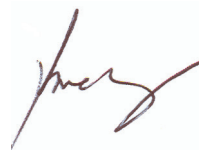
As mentioned in our letter to you earlier, most human cases have reported contact with poultry or live animal markets. Knowledge about the main virus reservoirs and the extent and distribution of the virus in animals remains limited. Since avian influenza A(H7N9) virus causes only subclinical infections in poultry, it is possible that the virus continues to circulate among poultry without any warning signals to human. In this connection, poultry workers might be at a higher risk of avian influenza A(H7N9) infection. In fact, a proportion of the cases reported in Mainland were also poultry workers.

In this connection, we would like to remind you that **working in live poultry industry** has been included as one of the epidemiological criteria since 6 December 2013. The reporting criteria for human influenza A (H7N9) infection are available on CENO On-line website (<http://ceno.chp.gov.hk/>). Please also be reminded that the list of affected areas is regularly uploaded to CHP website (http://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/global_statistics_avian_influenza_e.pdf).

Any suspected case meeting the reporting criteria (<https://ceno.chp.gov.hk/casedef/casedef.pdf>) should be immediately reported to the Central Notification Office (CENO) of CHP via fax (2477 2770), phone (2477 2772) or CENO On-line (<http://ceno.chp.gov.hk/>). Please also contact the Medical Control Officer of DH at Pager: 7116 3300 call 9179 when reporting any suspected case. DH will make arrangement to send the patient to regional public hospitals for isolation, testing and treatment. Please isolate patient to minimize contact/exposure to staff and other patients and advise the patient to wear a surgical mask while waiting for transport.

For updates on the latest situation of avian influenza, please visit CHP website at http://www.chp.gov.hk/en/view_content/24244.html. Thank you for your ongoing support in combating communicable diseases.

Yours faithfully,



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