監測及流行病學處

衞生防護中心
Centre for Health Protection
保障市民健康
Protecting Hong Kong's health

Surveillance
And
Epidemiology
Branch

本署檔號 Our Ref. : (193) in DH SEB CD/8/6/1 Pt.28

31 December 2014

Dear Medical Superintendent,

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

Further to our letter to you dated 28 December 2014, I would like to draw your attention to the incident that a number of samples from a consignment of live chickens from a registered farm in Huicheng District of Huizhou in Guangdong were tested positive for H7 avian influenza by polymerase chain reaction tests.

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD) has declared the Cheung Sha Wan Temporary Wholesale Poultry Market as an infected place. All the live poultry in the market will be culled starting from today. The market will also be closed for 21 days (counting from the next day following completion of the culling operation) for thorough cleansing and disinfection. During the closure period, trading of live poultry will be suspended. AFCD will also inspect all local farms and collect more samples for testing.

Supply of live poultry from the index registered farm will be suspended, during which the relevant inspection and quarantine authorities will conduct investigation at the farm concerned and ascertain that the farm has met all of the biosecurity and management requirements. AFCD, the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department and the Centre for Food Safety will also strengthen the surveillance and control measures against H7N9 along the supply chain of live poultry.

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health (DH) will contact the poultry wholesalers and workers in the Man Kam To Animal Inspection Station and the Cheung Sha Wan Temporary Wholesale Poultry Market to follow up on their health condition.

In accordance with the Preparedness Plan for Influenza Pandemic on the Serious Response Level, the Government has adopted corresponding contingency

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The Centre for Health Protection is a professional arm of the Department of Health for disease prevention and control

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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.

According to the World Health Organization, human infection appears to be associated with exposure to infected live poultry or contaminated environments, including markets where live poultry are sold. 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. As such, poultry workers might be at a higher risk of avian influenza A(H7N9) infection.

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/). Private medical practitioners should 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 a regional public hospital for isolation, testing and treatment. Please isolate the 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,

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for Controller, Centre for Health Protection
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