

本署檔號 Our Ref. : (133) in DH SEB CD/8/6/1 Pt.33

December 20, 2016

Dear Superintendent,

**A Confirmed Imported Case of Human Infection with Avian Influenza
A(H7N9) Virus**

We would like to draw your attention to the first confirmed imported case of human infection with avian influenza A(H7N9) virus in Hong Kong in this winter and solicit your support to remain vigilant against avian influenza.

The case involved a 75-year-old man who had history of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and secondary polycythemia. He travelled alone to Changping in Dongguan, Guangdong from November 28 to December 9, 2016. He attended a hospital in Dongguan for chest discomfort on December 8. He also had on and off cough with sputum, shortness of breath and runny nose. He returned to Hong Kong via Lo Wu on December 9 to seek medical treatment. He was sent to North District Hospital directly by ambulance and was admitted for management. His nasopharyngeal swab collected on December 9 was tested positive for enterovirus/rhinovirus but negative for influenza virus by the Public Health Laboratory Services Branch (PHLSB) of the Centre for Health Protection (CHP).

On December 17, the patient's condition deteriorated with development of fever and oxygen desaturation. He was managed as pneumonia. His nasopharyngeal aspirate collected on December 19 was tested positive for influenza A(H7N9) virus by the PHLSB. He is now in serious condition and is under isolation. Investigation revealed that he had visited wet market in Dongguan. His home contacts have remained asymptomatic so far and have been put under medical surveillance. Tracing of his other contacts is underway. The CHP's investigation is continuing.



Prior to this case, sixteen imported human H7N9 cases have been recorded in Hong Kong from December 2013 to April 2016. Cumulatively, a total

of 808 human H7N9 cases have been reported globally since March 2013.

There has been increase in the activity of avian influenza viruses in neighboring areas and overseas countries since November 2016. The avian influenza activity is expected to increase further in this winter based on its seasonal pattern. In this regard, we would like to urge you to pay special attention to patients who presented with fever or influenza-like illness. It is essential to obtain their travel history and relevant exposure history during travel. Any patients with acute respiratory illness or pneumonia, and with at-risk exposure (including live poultry workers, history of visiting market with live poultry, contact with poultry, etc.) in affected areas within the incubation period (i.e. 10 days before onset of symptoms) should be managed as suspected cases and immediately reported to the Central Notification Office of the CHP via fax (2477 2770), phone (2477 2772) or CENO On-line (https://cdis.chp.gov.hk/CDIS_CENO_ONLINE/ceno.html).

Private doctors should contact the Medical Control Officer of the Department of Health at pager: 7116 3300 (call 9179) when reporting any suspected case outside office hours. The CHP will make arrangement to send the patient to a public hospital for isolation, testing and treatment. Besides, it is important to isolate the patient to minimise contact with or exposure to staff and other patients and advise the patient to wear a surgical mask while waiting for transfer.

For updates on the latest situation of avian influenza, please visit the CHP's designated website at http://www.chp.gov.hk/en/view_content/24244.html. Please draw the attention of the healthcare professionals and supporting staff in your institution/ working with you to the above. Thank you for your ongoing support in combating communicable diseases.

Yours faithfully,



(Dr. Yonnie LAM)
for Controller, Centre for Health Protection
Department of Health