

本署檔號 Our Ref. : (130) in DH SEB CD/8/6/1 Pt.27

28 December, 2014

Dear Managers / Infection Control Officers,

**A Confirmed Case of Human Infection with Avian Influenza A(H7N9) virus and
Activation of Serious Response Level of Government's Preparedness Plan**

I would like to draw your attention to a confirmed case of human infection with avian influenza A(H7N9) virus in Hong Kong. The patient is a 68-year-old Chinese woman. She lives with her husband in Tuen Mun.

Preliminary epidemiological investigation revealed that the patient travelled to Longgang, Shenzhen on December 13 and returned to Hong Kong on the same day. According to the patient's family, she developed fever and symptoms of influenza-like illness since December 19 and consulted two private doctors on December 19 and 23. She presented with shortness of breath on December 25 and attended the Accident and Emergency Department of TMH on the same day. She was admitted and was subsequently transferred to the Intensive Care Unit for further management. The diagnosis was pneumonia and she is now in critical condition.

Her respiratory specimens were tested positive for influenza A(H7N9) virus by the Centre for Health Protection (CHP)'s Public Health Laboratory Services Branch on December 27. Tracing of the patient's close contacts is underway. The CHP's investigation is on-going.

The Government has raised the influenza response level from "Alert" Response Level to "Serious" Response Level under the Framework of Government's Preparedness Plan for Influenza Pandemic on December 27, 2014.

To prevent avian influenza and other respiratory illnesses, please kindly remind your clients / staff to observe strict hand hygiene, avoid touching their mouth, nose or eyes and avoid visiting wet markets with live poultry or contacting poultry especially when travelling to H7N9 virus affected areas. Besides, they should wash hands frequently with liquid soap, especially before handling food or eating, after going to toilet, or when hands are dirtied by respiratory secretion after coughing or sneezing. In addition, the following measures are also advised:



- Avoid touching poultry/birds/animals or their droppings;
- Wash hands thoroughly with liquid soap and water immediately in case of contact with poultry/birds/animals or their droppings;
- Build up good body resistance and have a healthy lifestyle. This can be achieved through a balanced diet, regular exercise, adequate rest, reducing stress and no smoking;
- Poultry and eggs should be thoroughly cooked before eating;
- Maintain good environmental hygiene;
- Maintain good indoor ventilation;
- Avoid going to crowded places with poor ventilation if feeling unwell; and
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces, furniture, commonly shared items and floor at least daily by using appropriate disinfectant (For non-metallic surface, disinfect with 1 part of household bleach in 99 parts of water, wait until dry and then rinse with water. For metallic surface, disinfect with 70% alcohol).

Clients / staff with recent history of contact with poultry or history of visiting wet markets with live poultry in avian influenza affected areas, should wear a mask and consult doctors promptly if they have respiratory symptoms, and inform the doctor of their exposure history. The affected clients / staff should avoid returning to the institution. You may wish to note that CHP has issued guidelines to residential care homes for the elderly and residential care homes for persons with disabilities on prevention of communicable diseases which can be accessed at http://chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/guidelines_on_prevention_of_communicable_diseases_in_residential_care_homes_for_the_elderly.pdf and http://chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/guideline_prevention_of_communicable_diseases_rchd.pdf respectively.

If you notice any increase in respiratory illnesses or absenteeism among clients or staff, please report to our Central Notification Office (Tel: 2477 2772; Fax: 2477 2770) for immediate epidemiological investigations and outbreak control. Further information on avian influenza is available at the CHP website (http://www.chp.gov.hk/en/view_content/24244.html).

Yours faithfully,



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