

本署檔號 Our Ref. : (18) in DH SEB CD/8/27/1 Pt.19

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Dear Managers / Infection Control Officer of Residential Care Home,

Increase in Influenza Activity in Hong Kong

Most recent surveillance data showed an increase in influenza activity in Hong Kong, which signals the arrival of the summer influenza season. Historically, the summer influenza season in Hong Kong tends to occur in July and August. In the past two weeks, there were increase in number of influenza isolates detected by our laboratory and increase in the consultation rate for influenza-like illness (ILI) among sentinel private doctors. Besides, the number of ILI outbreaks in institutions has increased from one in the week ending July 17 to seven in the week ending July 24. The main circulating influenza viruses consist mainly of human swine influenza, seasonal influenza A (H3N2) and seasonal influenza B.

In this regard, I would like to urge you to keep vigilance and implement prompt preventive measures against influenza and other respiratory infections at your institution/organization. Young children, elderly people and patients with chronic diseases are more prone to influenza infection and its complications. As institutions and organizations are collective assembly places, infectious diseases like influenza could be easily spread among people through their daily contact. Sources of infection could come from staff, visitors or clients (especially those just discharged from hospitals).

To prevent outbreaks of influenza or other respiratory infections, clients/staff with acute febrile illness should not attend institution/organization till 48 hours after fever has subsided. Besides, residents with fever and respiratory symptoms should be promptly isolated. The following health measures are important:

- To maintain good ventilation;
- To maintain good personal hygiene, covering nose and mouth while sneezing or coughing and dispose of nasal and mouth discharge properly;



- Keeping hands clean and wash hands properly;
- Washing hands when they are dirtied by respiratory secretions e.g. after sneezing;
- To build up good body immunity by having a proper diet, regular exercise and adequate rest, reducing stress and avoiding smoking;
- To avoid visiting crowded places with poor ventilation, especially during influenza season; and
- To wear face masks and consult doctor promptly if influenza-like symptoms develop.

You are reminded to monitor the sick pattern or absenteeism among your staff or clients, and report promptly to our Central Notification Office (Tel: 2477-2772; Fax: 2477-2770) if there is a suspected outbreak of respiratory infection in your institution/organization. For the latest information on influenza activity, please see our Swine and Seasonal Flu Monitor at the website of the Centre for Health Protection (www.chp.gov.hk).

Yours faithfully,



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