

本署檔號 Our Ref. : (41) in DH SEB CD 8/6/1 Pt. 27

3 January 2012

Dear Manager / Infection Control Officer of Residential Care Home,

**A case of human infection with H5N1 avian influenza in Shenzhen**

Further to our letter to you on 21 December 2011 regarding vigilance against avian influenza, we are writing to inform you that the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) received notification from the Ministry of Health in China on 30 December 2011 of a case of human infection with H5N1 avian influenza. The patient was a 39-year-old man living in Shenzhen. He developed symptoms on 21 December 2011 and was admitted to a hospital on 25 December 2011 because of severe pneumonia. He died on 31 December 2011 and his respiratory specimen was confirmed positive for H5N1 avian influenza virus. The man had no travel history or contact with poultry before the onset of symptoms.

The Government is on full alert to the threat of avian influenza and has raised the response level under the Government's preparedness plan for influenza pandemic from "Alert" to "Serious" since 20 December 2011 in response to a chicken carcass sample found in Cheung Sha Wan Wholesale Poultry Market that was tested positive for H5N1 avian influenza virus.

CHP is maintaining close liaison with the Guangdong Department of Health to obtain more information on the case. We have further strengthened surveillance and continue to maintain stringent port health measures at various ports of entry, including those bordering Shenzhen.

H5N1 avian influenza is a type of Influenza A virus. It mainly affects birds and poultry. Occasionally, it can be transmitted to human if a person has close contact with infected birds/poultry. In Hong Kong, H5N1 avian influenza infection in human was first reported in 1997. As of today, there were 21 H5N1 avian influenza infections reported in humans, including 18 in 1997, 2 in 2003 and 1 in 2010.



To prevent avian influenza, the following measures are advised:

- Avoid touching poultry, birds or their droppings, because they may carry the avian influenza virus;
- Wash hands thoroughly with liquid soap and water immediately in case of contact with poultry, birds or their droppings;
- Keep hands clean and wash hands properly;
- Cover nose and mouth while sneezing or coughing. Dispose sputum or secretions wrapped in tissue paper into rubbish bins with lids. Wash hands with liquid soap and water afterwards;
- 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 crowded places with poor ventilation if feeling unwell; and
- Seek medical advice if fever or respiratory symptoms develop.

Staff or residents who develop symptoms of fever or influenza-like illness should seek medical advice early. The affected staff and residents should avoid returning to the institution.

If you notice any increase in respiratory illnesses or absenteeism among your staff or residents, please report to our Central Notification Office (Tel: 2477 2772; Fax: 2477 2770) for immediate epidemiological investigations and outbreak control.

More information on Avian Influenza is available at CHP website (<http://www.chp.gov.hk>).

Yours faithfully,



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



衛生防護中心乃衛生署  
轄下執行疾病預防  
及控制的專業架構  
The Centre for Health  
Protection is a  
professional arm of the  
Department of Health for  
disease prevention and  
control