

本署檔號 Our Ref. : (56) in DH SEB CD/8/93/1

25 February, 2013

Dear Manager / Infection Control Officer,

**Vigilance against Severe Respiratory Disease associated with Novel
Coronavirus**

I would like to update you on the latest development of severe respiratory disease associated with novel coronavirus (NCoV). As of 21 February 2013, a total of 13 confirmed cases of human infection with NCoV were reported, including 7 deaths. Of the 13 confirmed cases, 6 were from the Saudi Arabia, 2 from Qatar, 2 from Jordan and 3 from the United Kingdom (UK). According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the latest two cases confirmed in the UK had no recent travel history, which offering indications of person-to-person transmission, although no sustained transmissions or expanding clusters of infections have been identified in any country. WHO and relevant health authorities are still investigating the exact route of transmission. Preventive and control measures have put in place and no cases of NCoV infection have been detected in Hong Kong so far.

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses which include viruses that may cause mild illness like common cold as well as severe illness like severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) in humans. The main symptoms in severe cases of NCoV infection identified so far include fever, cough and shortness of breath. This NCoV is different from any coronaviruses (including SARS-coronavirus) that have previously been found in humans or animals. The mode of transmission is not known with certainty at this time though coronaviruses are typically spread like other respiratory infections such as influenza. This virus may remain viable in the environment for some time and they are easily destroyed by most detergents and cleaning agents.



To prevent NCoV infection and other respiratory illnesses, the following measures are advised:

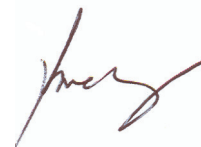
- To avoid direct contact with animals or birds and poultry;

- To build up good body immunity by having a proper diet, regular exercise and adequate rest, reducing stress and avoiding smoking;
- To maintain good personal and environmental hygiene;
- To keep hands clean and wash hands properly;
- To cover nose and mouth while sneezing or coughing and dispose of nasal and mouth discharge properly;
- To wash hands after sneezing, coughing or cleaning the nose;
- To avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth with bare hands;
- To maintain good ventilation;
- To avoid visiting crowded places with poor ventilation;
- To clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces, furnitures, 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); and
- To wear surgical mask and seek medical advice promptly if symptoms of respiratory tract infection or fever develop.

You may wish to find further information on our advice on prevention of severe respiratory disease associated with NCoV in the following link (http://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/guideline_general_public_en.pdf).

Besides, if you notice an increase in respiratory illnesses or absenteeism among clients or staff in your institution, please report promptly to our Central Notification Office (Tel: 2477 2772; Fax: 2477 2770) for immediate epidemiological investigations and outbreak control. For the latest information on severe respiratory disease associated with NCoV, please visit the website of the Centre for Health Protection (www.chp.gov.hk).

Yours faithfully,



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