

本署檔號 Our Ref. : (43) in DH SEB CD/8/6/1 Pt.27

12 January 2012

Dear Principal / Person-in-charge,

**Alert Response Level for Avian Influenza**

We would like to update you on the latest situation of avian influenza in Hong Kong. The Government has activated the Serious Response Level since 20 December 2011 on detection of highly pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza virus in a chicken carcass sample taken from the Cheung Sha Wan Temporary Wholesale Poultry Market. Among other prevention and control measures, the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) has completed medical surveillance on some 500 local chicken farmers, live poultry wholesalers and retailers. No abnormality was detected nor were symptoms of human H5N1 avian influenza infection found among them. No human H5N1 avian influenza case in Hong Kong has been found under the enhanced surveillance by CHP together with public and private hospitals.

The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department and the Centre for Food Safety have taken samples from local farms and chilled chickens and all samples were tested negative for H5N1 avian influenza virus. There was also no further report of poultry infection with H5N1 avian influenza virus. In this connection, the Government decided to revert the influenza response level under the Framework of Government's Preparedness Plan for Influenza Pandemic from "Serious" to "Alert" Response Level on 12 January 2012.

H5N1 avian influenza in humans is transmitted through close contact with infected live birds and poultry, their droppings or dead bodies. In view of the on-going activities of highly pathogenic avian influenza among poultry outside Hong Kong, the public are advised to stay vigilant and maintain strict personal and environmental hygiene.



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.

Students/staff who develop symptoms of fever or influenza-like illness should seek medical advice early. The affected students/staff should avoid attending school.

If you notice any increase in respiratory illnesses or absenteeism among your students or staff, 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. S K CHUANG)  
for Controller  
Centre for Health Protection  
Department of Health

