傳 染 病 處

衞生防護中心
Centre for Health Protection
保障市民健康
Protecting Hong Kong's health

Communicable Disease Branch

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Dear Doctor,

A measles outbreak involving three workers at the Hong Kong International Airport

We would like to draw your attention to a measles outbreak affecting three workers at the Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA) and urge you to maintain vigilance against measles.

The index case is a 30-year-old non-locally born man who developed fever and cough on March 31, followed by a rash on April 4. He had recently travelled to Indonesia during the incubation period. He had worked at the HKIA on April 3 while infectious (i.e. during his communicable period, which spans 4 days before to 4 days after the onset of rash). The second and third cases were colleagues of the index case. They had worked the same shift with him on April 3 when the index case was infectious, and likely acquired the infection from him on the same day. The second case involved a 30-year-old non-locally born man who developed fever and sore throat on April 15, followed by a rash on April 17. He had no travel history during the incubation period. The third case involved a 37-year-old locally born man who developed fever and myalgia on April 15, followed by a rash on April 18. All three cases had unknown vaccination history.

The cases were all admitted to public hospitals for treatment and are in stable condition. Epidemiological investigations and contact tracing are ongoing. A health booth has also been set up at the airport to provide assessment and mop-up vaccination to airport staff.

Hong Kong achieved measles elimination status in 2016, and since then the incidence has remained low. However, amid a global resurgence of measles, there has been a significant upsurge in measles cases locally in 2024 and 2025 with 10 cases recorded in each year, following a low incidence from 2020 to 2023. As of April 20, five measles cases have been recorded so far this year. Given the high

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volume of international travel in Hong Kong, the risk of measles importations continues to pose significant threats to the local population. The measles outbreak at the HKIA in 2019, together with the current importation-associated cluster among airport workers, serves as a timely reminder of the importance of vaccination and closing population immunity gaps.

Vaccination is the best protection against measles and it is essential to maintain a high level of immunity (≥95%) in the local population to prevent the spread of measles in Hong Kong. The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health advises all persons with incomplete vaccination, unknown vaccination history or unknown immunity against measles to seek medical advice on measles vaccination.

In this regard, we would like to enlist your assistance to inform non-immune individuals of the risk of measles and advise them to receive vaccination if they have not done so, especially non-locally born people, airport workers, foreign domestic helpers and travellers. In general, people can be considered as non-immune to measles if:

(i) they have not had the infection confirmed by laboratory test before, and
(ii) they have not been fully vaccinated against measles or have unknown vaccination status.

People born and lived in Hong Kong before 1967 can be considered to have immunity from natural infection. Those who are unvaccinated or with unknown vaccination history should receive two doses of measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) combination vaccine, while those who had already received one dose of MMR vaccine in the past should receive a further dose to complete the course.

Measles is extremely infectious and can be transmitted through airborne droplets. The CHP advises people who may have been exposed to measles (e.g. contacts of measles patients and travellers returning from places with high incidence or ongoing outbreak of measles) to promptly report their symptoms and travel history/contact history to their healthcare professionals in advance. It is essential for healthcare facilities to implement appropriate infection control measures to prevent any potential spread from suspected measles cases. This includes routinely taking a detailed travel and contact history from all patients presenting with symptoms suggestive of measles (e.g. fever and rash), especially in settings with non-immune persons, children under 12 months and pregnant women. All suspected measles cases must be isolated to prevent potential spread. If a patient informs your staff that they had contact with a measles patient or had travelled to an

area with outbreak of measles, please make special arrangements to ensure they will not come into contact with non-immune persons in your facilities.

Moreover, please note that there are special requirements for ascertainment of measles immunity of healthcare workers (HCWs) as recommended by the CHP's Scientific Committee on Vaccine Preventable Diseases. All HCWs should be immune to measles, by either vaccination or medical evaluation. HCWs without evidence of immunity should be offered measles vaccination. Please refer to the following webpage for details and make sure patient-facing staff in your hospitals and clinics have measles immunity. (https://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/summary_statement_on_vaccination_practice_for_health_care_workers_in_hong_kong_september_2017.pdf).

Measles is a statutorily notifiable disease in Hong Kong. Any suspected or confirmed measles cases should be notified to the Central Notification Office of the CHP via fax (2477 2770), phone (2477 2772) or CENO On-line (https://cdis.chp.gov.hk/CDIS_CENO_ONLINE/ceno.html). Please implement appropriate infection control measures at your healthcare facilities to prevent any potential spread from suspected measles cases.

I would appreciate if you kindly draw the attention of other healthcare professionals and supporting staff in your institution/working with you to the above. Further information on measles is available from the CHP's thematic webpage (https://www.chp.gov.hk/en/features/100419.html). May I take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support in combating infectious diseases and promoting immunisation in Hong Kong.

Yours faithfully,



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