

香港特別行政區政府
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THE GOVERNMENT OF THE HONG KONG
SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGION
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
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3 March 2020

Dear health professionals,

Updated Situation of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

Further to our letter on 25 February 2020, we would like to provide you an update on the development of coronavirus disease-19 (COVID-19) in different countries.

The situation of COVID-19 has been evolving rapidly. In addition to recent sharp increases in the daily number of confirmed cases in Korea as reported in our previous letter, active community transmissions are also occurring in Italy and Iran in the past week.

As at 6pm on 27 February, there were 650 COVID-19 cases (including 17 deaths) in Italy. There have been sharp increases in the daily number of confirmed cases since 23 February. The majority of the cases occurred in the regions of Lombardy (403, 62%), Veneto (111, 17%) and Emilia Romagna (97, 14.9%). According to the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, the current event indicates that local transmission may have resulted in several clusters for which an epidemiological link to areas where ongoing transmission is presumed.

In Iran, there was also a marked increase in the number of reported cases. A total of 245 confirmed cases (including 26 deaths) have been

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reported. The case fatality rate was 10.6%, which was much higher than that reported by any other countries.

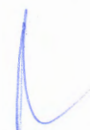
In view of the latest situation, the Government issued a Red Outbound Travel Alert (OTA) on three regions in Italy, namely Emilia-Romagna, Lombardy and Veneto on 28 February 2020. While a Red OTA on Iran has already been in place since 10 January 2020 due to safety concerns, the Government also alerted public about the outbreak of COVID-19 and associated health risks in that country. Health quarantine arrangements on inbound travelers from the involved countries/ regions have been strengthened accordingly.

We would like to remind healthcare workers to remain vigilant when serving patients/clients with recent travel history to a place with active community transmission of COVID-19. Please advise them to seek medical advice promptly if they have fever or respiratory symptoms, and to inform the doctor of their recent travel history and any contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19. The updated list of places with active community transmission is available from the following webpage of CHP: https://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/statistics_of_the_cases_novel_coronavirus_infection_en.pdf. Please share the above messages with your colleagues/ staff working in your institution.

For the latest information on COVID-19, please visit <https://www.coronavirus.gov.hk/eng/index.html>.

Thank you very much for your support.

Yours sincerely,



(Dr Kellie SO)
for Director of Health