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22 May 2009

Dear Principal/Person-in-charge,

The Fourth Imported Case of Human Swine Influenza (HSI) in Hong Kong

I am writing to inform you that we have confirmed the fourth imported case of HSI (Influenza A/H1N1) today.

The patient is a 19-year-old student studying in New York, United States. She returned to Hong Kong from New York (Cathay Pacific CX831) on 18 May 2009. The patient sat on row 43, within 3 rows of the first confirmed imported case reported by Taiwan, China (row 41).

She did not have any symptoms during the journey to Hong Kong. She had onset of malaise on May 20 and developed fever on May 21. Her specimen is positive for human swine influenza (Influenza A/H1N1) today. She was admitted to Princess Margaret Hospital for management and isolation. Her condition is stable.

Young children are particularly susceptible to influenza transmission and school outbreaks are common from North America experience. Spread of HSI, as with most other respiratory viruses, is particularly important in young children. Clinical severity of HSI on young people also remains uncertain.

When the first local HSI case occurs (i.e. the occurrence of a confirmed local case that has no identifiable link, such as travel to an affected area in the previous 7 days, or exposure to a confirmed index case with such history or his secondary contacts), the Government may consider closing all primary schools, kindergartens and nurseries for up to 14 days and the arrangements will be reviewed as appropriate.



There are also concerns about overseas students coming back to Hong Kong for

summer break. They are advised to defer their flight if they feel sick. If they develop fever on the plane, they should inform the aircrew so that our port health officials would take care of them upon their arrival. If they fall ill after returning to Hong Kong, they should wear a mask and consult a doctor immediately.

The CHP has been working closely with the Education Bureau and Social Welfare Department on measures against the spread of HSI. Schools and pre-primary institutions will be informed at an appropriate time if there is a need to suspend classes. If you notice an increase in respiratory illnesses or absenteeism among your staff or students, please report to our Central Notification Office (Tel: 2477-2772; Fax: 2477-2770) for immediate epidemiological investigations and outbreak control.

For the latest information and health education material on HSI, please see our CHP website at www.chp.gov.hk.

Yours faithfully,



(Dr. SK CHUANG)

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