

本署檔號 Our Ref. : (56) in DH CDB/9/12/6 Pt. 1

January 11, 2020

Dear Doctor,

**Updates on the Cases of Infection with Novel Coronavirus in Wuhan**

Further to our letter dated January 9, 2020, we would like to update you with the latest situation of the reported cluster of pneumonia cases in Wuhan, Hubei Province (湖北省武漢市).

After the preliminary determination that the pathogen of "viral pneumonia with unknown cause" is a novel coronavirus, the expert groups have immediately revised and improved the protocols on diagnosis, treatment and surveillance of viral pneumonia with unknown cause. The Wuhan Municipal Health Commission has arranged the samples of existing patients to be tested for nucleic acid of the novel coronavirus, and the Expert Groups have made overall assessments on the patients hospitalised for observation and treatment, taking into considerations of information on clinical picture, epidemiological information and laboratory testing results, etc.

As at yesterday (January 10), 41 patients have been diagnosed to have infection of the novel coronavirus. The earliest and most recent cases had onset of illness on December 8, 2019 and January 2, 2020 respectively. Symptoms include fever, malaise, dry cough and shortness of breath. The vital signs were stable in most of the cases. Among them, two patients have been discharged, seven patients are in serious condition and one died, while the remaining patients are in stable condition. The fatal case affected a 61 years old man with abdominal tumour and chronic liver disease who was admitted to a hospital due to respiratory failure and severe pneumonia. The diagnoses included severe pneumonia, acute respiratory distress syndrome, septicaemic shock and multi-organ failure.



According to information from the National Health Commission, epidemiological investigations revealed that the patients are mainly business operators at a market called "Hua Nan Seafood Wholesale Market" in Wuhan, which has been closed since January 1, 2020. A total of 739 close contacts have been identified and 419 of them are healthcare workers. All have been put under medical surveillance, and no related cases have been detected so far. There have been no new cases since January 3. For the time being, the Mainland's investigation has neither identified any infection of healthcare workers nor definite evidence of human-to-human transmission.

Regarding the laboratory tests, relevant experts have released a coronavirus genome from a case of the Wuhan outbreak. The sequence can be downloaded from the following website: <http://virological.org/t/initial-genome-release-of-novel-coronavirus/319>. The Public Health Laboratory Services Branch of the Centre for Health Protection is conducting molecular testing for a number of coronaviruses, and the current test is able to detect the novel coronavirus based on sequence comparison but not yet evaluated due to unavailability of the novel coronavirus.

We will closely monitor the situation and update you further when more information becomes available. You may visit the designated webpage (<https://www.chp.gov.hk/en/features/102465.html>) for updated information on the reported cases fulfilling the reporting criteria for Severe Respiratory Disease associated with a Novel Infectious Agent and the relevant health advice. Please draw the attention of the healthcare professionals and supporting staff in your institution/ working with you to the above. Thank you for your continuous support in combating communicable diseases.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in red ink, appearing to read 'SK Chuang', is written over a light blue grid background.

(Dr. SK Chuang)

for Controller, Centre for Health Protection  
Department of Health