

本署檔號 Our Ref. : (1) in DH CDB/9/12/6 Pt. 3

January 22, 2020

Dear Doctor,

A Highly Suspected Imported Case of Novel Coronavirus Infection

We would like to inform you of a highly suspected imported case of novel coronavirus (nCoV) infection, and draw your attention to our interim infection control guidelines.

The highly suspected case involved a 39-year-old male patient who lived in Wuhan. He had good past health. He had fever and blocked nose since January 21, 2020. He traveled from Wuhan to Shenzhenbei and then from Shenzhenbei to Hong Kong by High Speed Rail on January 21, 2020. He was noted to have fever at Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong West Kowloon Rail Station by staff of Port Health Division of Department of Health, and was sent to Queen Elizabeth Hospital for isolation and treatment immediately. The patient was transferred to Princess Margaret Hospital for further treatment on January 22, 2020. He remained in stable condition so far. Preliminary testing of his respiratory specimen was positive for nCoV.

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) has initiated epidemiological investigation and contact tracing. According to information from the patient, he did not visit any healthcare facilities, wet markets or seafood markets during the incubation period. He had no contact with wild animals or birds, or patients with pneumonia or symptoms of upper respiratory tract infections. His travel companions were asymptomatic so far and had departed from Hong Kong to Philippines.

The CHP has set up a hotline (2125 1122) for a highly suspected case of Severe Respiratory Disease associated with a Novel Infectious Agent. Persons who took High Speed Rail on January 21, 2020 from Wuhan to Shenzhenbei (G1015, No 3 carriage) or from Shenzhenbei to Hong Kong West Kowloon (G5607, No 2 carriage) should call the hotline.



In the past few days, increasing numbers of confirmed cases of nCoV infection have been reported from different provinces in the Mainland as well as overseas countries/areas. Information on the number of cases reported in

countries/areas is available on the designated webpage of the CHP:

https://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/statistics_of_the_cases_novel_coronavirus_infection_en.pdf

So far, most of the reported cases had travel history to Hubei especially Wuhan before onset of illnesses. However, cases without travel history to Hubei but having close contacts with other confirmed cases have been reported at least in Guangdong. According to information from the World Health Organization (WHO), 15 healthcare workers in Wuhan were reported to have nCoV infection. Unofficial information revealed that those healthcare workers worked in neurosurgical ward and acquired the infection from a case initially not suspected to have nCoV infection. It is very clear from the latest information that there is at least some human-to-human transmission of nCoV. In addition, information about newly reported infections suggests there may be sustained human-to-human transmission.

In view of the latest situation and risk assessment, we would like to alert healthcare workers to adopt stringent infection control measures to reduce the risk of transmission from silent patients in healthcare settings. You are advised to follow the relevant interim guidelines as follows:

- Recommended Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) in hospitals/clinics under Serious Response Level (Severe Respiratory Disease associated with a Novel Infectious Agent) (Interim):
https://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/recommended_ppe_for_nid_eng.pdf
- Prevention of Severe Respiratory Disease associated with a Novel Infectious Agent - Infection Control Measures for Allied Health Professionals (Interim Guidelines)
https://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/ic_measures_for_nid_allied_health_eng.pdf
- Key Elements on Prevention and Control of Severe Respiratory Disease associated with a Novel Infectious Agent in Healthcare Settings (Interim)
https://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/ic_advice_for_nid_in_healthcare_settings.pdf

In addition, I would like to draw your attention to WHO's interim guidance on "Infection prevention and control during health care when novel coronavirus (nCoV) infection is suspected" ([https://www.who.int/publications-detail/infection-prevention-and-control-during-health-care-when-novel-coronavirus-\(ncov\)-infection-is-suspected](https://www.who.int/publications-detail/infection-prevention-and-control-during-health-care-when-novel-coronavirus-(ncov)-infection-is-suspected)). The WHO emphasises that clinical triage including early recognition and immediate placement of patients in separate area from other patients (source control) is an essential measure for rapid identification and appropriate

isolation and care of patients with suspected nCoV infection. Standard precautions should always be applied at all times. Additional contact and droplet precautions should continue until the patient is asymptomatic.

Private doctors are reminded to call the Medical Control Officer (MCO) of the Department of Health at Pager: 7116 3300 call 9179 immediately when reporting any case. The CHP will make arrangement to transfer the patient to a public hospital by ambulance for isolation, testing and treatment.

Please draw the attention of the healthcare professionals and supporting staff in your institution/ working with you to the above. May I take this opportunity to thank you for your continuous support in combating infectious disease in Hong Kong.

Yours faithfully,



(Dr. SK Chuang)

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