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January 20, 2020

Dear Medical Superintendent,

Updates on Cases of Novel Coronavirus Infection in Mainland China and Korea and the Revised Reporting Criteria

We would like to update you on the cases of novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) infection reported in Mainland China and Korea, and the revised reporting criteria of "Severe Respiratory Disease associated with a Novel Infectious Agent".

According to the information from the National Health Commission (NHC), a total of 136 new cases of pneumonia of novel coronavirus infection were reported from January 18 to 10pm on January 19. The total number of pneumonia cases of novel coronavirus infection in Wuhan was 198 cases (as of 10pm on January 19). Among them, 25 patients have been discharged, and three died. Currently, 170 patients are still hospitalised with 126 in stable condition, 35 in serious condition and nine in critical condition. A total of 817 close contacts have been identified. All have been put under medical surveillance with 727 of them having completed the surveillance, and no related cases have been detected so far.

Separately, according to the information from the NHC, two pneumonia cases of novel coronavirus infection imported from Wuhan were reported in Beijing on January 19. They are currently receiving treatment in isolation and are in stable condition. Medical surveillance against close contacts has been initiated, and no abnormalities such as fever have been detected among them so far. The Health Commission of Guangdong Province also reported the first imported pneumonia case of novel coronavirus infection on 19 January. The patient is a 66-year-old man residing in Shenzhen, who travelled to Wuhan on December 29 last year and developed symptoms including fever and generalised weakness on January 3. He sought medical attention in Shenzhen on January 4 and was transferred to receive treatment in isolation on January 11. The health authority of Guangdong Province has commenced relevant contact tracing of the close contacts.



On January 20, the Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported the first confirmed case of infection of novel coronavirus in Korea, affecting a 35-year-old female who travelled from Wuhan. She was found to have fever upon arriving Korea on January 19 and was subsequently tested positive for novel

coronavirus.

In view of the latest situation and risk assessment, the Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health will further enhance surveillance and revise the reporting criteria of "Severe Respiratory Disease associated with a Novel Infectious Agent" as follows:

- An individual with fever and acute respiratory illness, or pneumonia; AND
- who had either one of the following within 14 days **BEFORE ONSET OF SYMPTOM**:
 - (a) visited Hubei Province; OR
 - (b) visited a medical hospital in Mainland China; OR
 - (c) had close contact with a confirmed case of novel coronavirus infection while that patient was symptomatic.

Please refer to the **Appendix** for the revised case definition of "Severe Respiratory Disease associated with a Novel Infectious Agent". It is also available on website of the Central Notification Office ("CENO On-line") (https://cdis.chp.gov.hk/CDIS_CENO_ONLINE/ceno.html). Please report cases fulfilling the reporting criteria to the Central Notification Office (CENO) of CHP via fax (2477 2770), phone (2477 2772) or CENO On-line. Private doctors are reminded to call the Medical Control Officer (MCO) of DH 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.

The CHP will continue to maintain its liaison with the World Health Organization, NHC and overseas health authorities, and closely monitor the situation for risk assessment. The reporting criteria will be adjusted in a timely manner according to the prevailing situation.

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)

for Controller, Centre for Health Protection
Department of Health

Appendix

Case definition

Severe Respiratory Disease associated with a Novel Infectious Agent
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Clinical Description

According to announcements from the health authorities of Mainland China, pneumonia cases caused by a novel coronavirus have been identified since December 2019 in Wuhan of Hubei Province (湖北省武汉市), China. Symptoms were mainly fever, cough while some had presented with shortness of breath. According to the information available (as of 20 January 2020), about one-fourth of the patients presented with severe conditions.

Reporting Criteria

An individual fulfilling the following should be reported to the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) for further investigation:

- Presented with fever and acute respiratory illness, or with pneumonia; AND
- Either one of the following conditions within 14 days **BEFORE ONSET OF SYMPTOM**:
 1. With travel history to Hubei Province* (irrespective of any exposure to a wet market or seafood market); OR
 2. Visited a medical hospital in Mainland China; OR
 3. Had close contact with a confirmed case of novel coronavirus infection while that patient was symptomatic.

*A list of the first level of administrative regions under Hubei Province is shown in the **Annex**. Further geographical information of Hubei Province can be found from the following website:

<http://xzqh.mca.gov.cn/defaultQuery?shengji=%BA%FE%B1%B1%CA%A1%28%B6%F5%29&diji=-1&xianji=-1>

Laboratory Criteria

Detection of nucleic acid of the novel coronavirus in a clinical specimen.

(The Mainland health authorities have preliminarily determined that the disease is caused by a novel coronavirus. The CHP is developing specific tests based on the information of the genetic sequences. The laboratory criteria will be updated when necessary.)

Case Classification

Suspected case

A case that fulfils the reporting criteria.

Probable case

A case that:

- fulfils the reporting criteria; **AND**
- has pneumonia confirmed by chest X-ray; **AND**
- has **either** one of the following: (i) exposure to a wet market in Wuhan, **or** (ii) visited a medical hospital in Wuhan; **or** (iii) had close contact with a confirmed case of novel coronavirus infection.

Confirmed case

A clinically compatible case that fulfils the laboratory criteria.

Annex

A list of the first level of administrative regions under Hubei Province:

- Wuhan (武汉市)
- Huangshi (黄石市)
- Shiyan (十堰市)
- Yichang (宜昌市)
- Xiangyang (襄陽市)
- Ezhou (鄂州市)
- Jingmen (荊門市)
- Xiaogan (孝感市)
- Jingzhou (荊州市)
- Huanggang (黃岡市)
- Xianning (咸寧市)
- Suizhou (隨州市)
- Enshi Tujia and Miao Autonomous Prefecture (恩施土家族苗族自治州)

