

本署檔號 Our Ref. : (53) in DH CDB/9/12/6/4 Pt.1

28 April 2020

Dear Medical Superintendent,

Amendments to the Prevention and Control of Disease Ordinance (Cap. 599) and appeal to perform tests of COVID-19 for patients

I write to inform you that Government published in the Gazette today the amendments of the Prevention and Control of Disease Ordinance (Cap. 599) (the Ordinance) and its subsidiary legislation, updating and standardising the use of "coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)" as the latest nomenclature for the statutorily notifiable disease in Hong Kong, and extending the validity of the Prevention and Control of Disease (Disclosure of Information) Regulation (Cap. 599D).

Naming of notifiable infectious disease and infectious agent

The disease caused by COVID-19 was first listed as a statutorily notifiable disease with the name "Severe Respiratory Disease associated with a Novel Infectious Agent" (嚴重新型傳染性病原體呼吸系統病) on 8 January 2020. In February 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) adopted the name "coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)" for the disease, and subsequently "severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2)" for the virus causing the disease. Under the amendments, "Severe Respiratory Disease associated with a Novel Infectious Agent" has been renamed as "coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)". Also, "severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2)" has also been added to the list of Scheduled Infectious Agents in Schedule 2 to the Ordinance so that the owner or the person in charge of a laboratory is required to notify the Director of Health any leakage of the infectious agent in the laboratory.



The amendments will not affect the provisions concerning the disease. Medical practitioners are reminded to report all confirmed cases of COVID-19 as well as any individual fulfilling the following to the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) for further investigation:

- i. Presented with fever or acute respiratory illness or pneumonia; and

- ii. Either one of the following conditions within 14 days before onset of symptom:
- With travel history to a place with active community transmission of COVID-19 (including all places outside Hong Kong currently); or
 - Had close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19.

Extending the validity of the Prevention and Control of Disease (Disclosure of Information) Regulation (Cap. 599D)

A health officer is currently empowered to require a person to disclose or furnish any information relevant to the handling of a state of the public health emergency, such as travel history. The relevant power is extended to other medical practitioners who would have encountered a person involved in such a public health emergency. The amendments have extended the validity of Cap. 599D from May 7, 2020, to August 31, 2020. It would be a criminal offence for any person to provide false or misleading information to the health officer/medical practitioners concerned. The maximum penalty for failure to comply is a fine of \$10,000 and imprisonment for six months.

Local situation

As of 28 April 2020, the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) of the Department of Health has recorded a total of 1038 cases of COVID-19, including 1037 confirmed cases and 1 probable case. Among these cases, 811 were discharged and 4 cases were fatal cases, the remaining 223 cases were still hospitalised. The cases including 559 males and 479 females with ages of the cases ranged from 40 days to 96 years (median: 35 years).

There was an upsurge in number of COVID-19 cases in Hong Kong from mid-March to late March, which was mainly due to marked increase in imported cases especially returnees from overseas countries. Clusters of locally acquired infections have been reported in public venues/recreational premises since mid-March, including large outbreaks in bars/pubs and karaokes. The number of cases has been decreasing gradually since early April. For the latest update, please refer to the website of the CHP: https://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/local_situation_covid19_en.pdf.

Testing for COVID-19

To enhance surveillance, free testing for COVID-19 has been provided to private medical practitioners (PMPs) by the Public Health Laboratory Services Branch of the CHP. PMPs are urged to collect specimens from as many patients as possible for COVID-19 testing by arranging patients

to save a deep throat saliva specimen. Patients can submit their deep throat saliva specimen to one of the 13 collection clinics (address: Chinese - https://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/list_of_collection_points_tc.pdf; English - https://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/list_of_collection_points_en.pdf) of the Department of Health from 9am to 1pm during weekdays and from 9am to 11am during Saturday, Sunday and Public holidays.

Apart from submitting specimens by the patients or their friends/relatives, two of the member companies of the Cyberport Startup Alumni Association, namely GoGo Tech Limited ("GOGO VAN") and HK PICK-UP LIMITED ("Pickupp") (hereafter "service providers") will provide door-to-door specimen collection service for patients who have been arranged with COVID-19 testing by PMPs at a charge of \$100 to be paid by the patients. For more information about the service, please refer to the following link of the Cyberport Startup Alumni Association: www.csaa.com.hk/blog/door-to-door-specimen-collection-service-new. Patients can choose to use the service by contacting the service providers directly and making their own direct payment. For service subscriptions and enquiries related to the two companies, please refer to the information below:

	GOGO VAN	Pickupp
Service Subscription	www.gogovan.com.hk/covid-19-testing-en/	hk.pickupp.io/en/blog/COVID-19-sample
General Enquiry	5681 4989 (hotline)	hk@pickupp.io

Thank you again for your unfailing support in the prevention and control of communicable diseases.

Yours faithfully,



(Dr. SK CHUANG)

for Controller, Centre for Health Protection
Department of Health