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22 September, 2010

Dear Medical Superintendent of private hospital,

A Local Case of Dengue Fever Reported

We would like to draw your attention to a local case of dengue fever reported in Hong Kong and to remind doctors to remain vigilant against this disease.

A local case of dengue fever was confirmed by the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) today. The patient was a 46-year-old gentleman who lived in Deep Water Bay together with his family members. He developed symptoms on 13/9/2010 which included fever, headache, rash, nausea, stomach ache and diarrhea. He consulted a general practitioner on 18/9/2010 but no hospitalization was required. His blood sample taken was positive for dengue virus type 4 by polymerase chain reaction. He is currently afebrile and his symptoms are subsiding. He did not travel out of Hong Kong during the incubation period. During the incubation period, he travelled daily to work in an office in Central. Except for a visit to Clear Water Bay in Sai Kung by him and his wife, his main activities were in the vicinity of Deep Water Bay, including Victoria Recreation Club and Middle Island (Tong Po Chau). His co-workers are asymptomatic. His two sons also experienced fever on 6/9/2010 and 10/9/2010 while his wife was asymptomatic all along. Epidemiological investigations on his family members and other collaterals are ongoing.

Vector surveillance and vector control measures are being carried out within 500m of his home in Deep Water Bay and the areas he visited. An interdepartmental meeting had been held today to discuss the preventive and control measures for dengue fever, including various services of Department of Health, Hospital Authority, Food and Environmental Hygiene Department, and other various government departments.



The CHP would enhance surveillance with Hospital Authority and private hospitals on suspected cases of dengue fever starting from 22 September 2010 to 6 October 2010. Definition for the enhanced surveillance for dengue fever are:

- 1) A person presented with acute febrile illness with **two or more** of the following features: headache, retro-orbital pain, myalgia, arthralgia, rash, haemorrhagic manifestations or leucopenia **AND**
- 2) History of visiting **Deep Water Bay or Middle Island** within the incubation period (two weeks before onset of fever)

For suspected cases of dengue fever fulfilling the above two criteria, please arrange blood test for dengue fever and report the case to Central Notification Office (CENO) of the CHP by fax (2477 2770), by phone (2477 2772), or via the CENO On-line website (<http://www.chp.gov.hk/ceno>). Please also call Medical Control Officer at 7116 3300 a/c 9179 outside office hour for prompt investigation. For febrile patients fulfilling both criteria above, please arrange hospital admission for further management. For arrangement of specimens to PHLSB, please visit <http://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/grp-specimenhandbook-en-2004122803.pdf> for further information.

A telephone hotline (2125 1122) will operate starting today to offer counselling to persons who lived or visited Deep Water Bay since 1 June 2010. Laboratory investigation or referral to hospital will be arranged if appropriate.

In Hong Kong, the last local outbreak of dengue fever occurred in September in 2002 affecting 16 persons in which 6 were residents and 10 were workers in Ma Wan. All of them recovered uneventfully. The outbreak was contained after implementation of aggressive control measures with the onset of the last case in September 2002. Apart from these 16 cases, there were four locally acquired sporadic cases occurred later in 2002 and one sporadic local case reported in 2003. Seven cases of dengue virus type 1 and one case of type 2 have been identified in these local cases. Since then, all dengue cases reported were imported from endemic areas mostly from Southeast Asia countries. The annual number of cases ranged from 31 to 58 from 2003 to 2009. Including the case confirmed today, we have recorded 61 cases so far this year.

Increased dengue activity is currently being reported in some neighbouring countries in the region, such as the Philippines, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Taiwan and India this year. Dengue fever virus type 4 had been detected from imported cases

coming from Indonesia, the Philippines, Malaysia, Thailand, Dominican Republic and Jamaica in the past.

Dengue fever is an acute febrile viral illness characterized by intense headache, retro-orbital pain, myalgia, arthralgia, rash, leucopenia or haemorrhagic manifestations. The disease is transmitted by the bite of infective *Aedes* mosquito, which mostly bites in the daytime. The incubation period ranges from 3 to 14 days. Dengue haemorrhagic fever is a severe and potentially fatal complication of dengue fever.

To prevent dengue fever, members of the public should avoid mosquito bites both locally and while visiting dengue fever endemic areas. More information on preventive measures could be found in the website of CHP: <http://www.chp.gov.hk/en/content/9/24/19.html>.

Yours sincerely,



(Dr. S.K CHUANG)

for Controller, Centre for Health Protection
Department of Health