

To: All Staff and Students,

Novel Coronavirus Infection in Wuhan

Further to my letter dated 8 January 2020, I would like to update you with the following:

- The pathogen of "viral pneumonia with unknown cause" has been identified to be a new type of coronavirus (novel coronavirus, nCoV), which was isolated on 7 January 2020 by the Mainland authority.
- The genetic sequence of the novel coronavirus has been shared internationally on 12 January and development of specific diagnostic kits has been underway.
- So far, no clear evidence of human-to-human transmission has been identified, but the possibility of limited human-to-human transmission could not be ruled out.

In view of the latest situation, university members are advised to maintain strict personal, food and environmental hygiene both locally and during travel. Students and staff are advised to check their temperature before coming to the campus every day. Those with respiratory illnesses or fever (oral temperature higher than 37.5°C, or ear temperature higher than 38°C) should refrain from coming to the campus. They should wear a surgical mask, consult doctors promptly, and inform the doctor of their travel and exposure history.

In particular, if you have visited Wuhan recently, visited a medical hospital in Mainland China recently, or had close contact with a confirmed case of the novel coronavirus while that patient was symptomatic, please closely monitor your health condition. Should you develop a fever or acute respiratory symptoms, please wear a surgical mask, seek further medical attention promptly, and inform the doctor about your travel history. If you have any inquiries or concerns, you are welcome to contact the UHS at 39172514.

The University will continue to remain highly vigilant, stay alert, and continue to monitor the latest development and take appropriate prevention and control measures according to the CHP's recommendations.

To prevent pneumonia and respiratory infection, university members are advised to:

- Perform hand hygiene frequently, especially before touching the mouth, nose or eyes; after touching public installations such as handrails or door knobs; or when hands are contaminated by respiratory secretions after coughing or sneezing;
- Maintain drainage pipes properly and add water to U-traps regularly to ensure environmental hygiene;
- Wash hands with liquid soap and water, and rub for at least 20 seconds. Then rinse with water and dry with a disposable paper towel. If hand washing facilities are not available, or when hands are not visibly soiled, performing hand hygiene with 70 to 80 per cent alcohol-based hand rub is an effective alternative;
- Cover your mouth and nose with tissue paper when sneezing or coughing. Dispose of soiled tissues into a lidded rubbish bin, then wash hands thoroughly; and

- When having respiratory symptoms, wear a surgical mask, refrain from work or attending class at school, avoid going to crowded places and seek medical advice promptly.

Please also take heed of the health advice below when travelling outside Hong Kong:

- Avoid visiting hospitals. If it is necessary to visit a hospital, put on a surgical mask and observe strict personal and hand hygiene;
- Avoid touching animals (including game), poultry/birds or their droppings;
- Avoid visiting wet markets, live poultry markets or farms;
- Avoid making close contact with patients, especially those with symptoms of acute respiratory infections;
- Do not consume game meat and do not patronise food premises where game meat is served;
- Adhere to food safety and hygiene rules such as avoiding consuming raw or undercooked animal products, including milk, eggs and meat, or foods which may be contaminated by animal secretions, excretions (such as urine) or contaminated products, unless they have been properly cooked, washed or peeled;
- If feeling unwell when outside Hong Kong, especially if having a fever or cough, wear a surgical mask, inform the hotel staff or tour escort and seek medical advice at once; and
- After returning to Hong Kong, consult a doctor promptly if having a fever or other symptoms, take the initiative to inform the doctor of any recent travel history and any exposure to animals, and wear a surgical mask to help prevent spread of the disease.

For the latest updates and prevention measures, please refer to the following webpages for more information:

1. [Severe Respiratory Disease associated with a Novel Infectious Agent](#)
2. [HKU's Public Health, Pandemic and Epidemic Disease Preparedness and Response webiste](#)

Should you have any inquiries, please contact UHS at 3917 2514.

Thank you for your co-operation and support.

Dr. M. K. Cheung

Director

University Health Service

January 17, 2020