

To: All Staff and Students,

Severe Respiratory Disease associated with a Novel Infectious Agent
(Viral Pneumonia in Wuhan)

Further to my letter dated 4 January 2020, I would like to update you with the following:

The Centre for Health Protection (CHP) has established the term “Severe Respiratory Disease associated with a Novel Infectious Agent” (嚴重新型傳染性病原體呼吸系統病). This term refers to the cluster of pneumonia cases with unknown aetiology occurring in Wuhan (武漢市) of the Mainland since December 2019. It is included as one of the statutorily notifiable diseases, with effect from 00:00 on January 8, 2020.

The HKU Task Force on Infectious Diseases has met to consider the necessary actions, and the following measures have been implemented:

1. Enhanced cleaning of public facilities in the University;
2. Enhanced infection control and surveillance measures in the University Health Service (UHS);
3. Launching a new webpage on [Severe Respiratory Disease associated with Novel Infectious Agent](#), where updated campus-specific response plans and guidelines are available.

As our campus will soon be welcoming a large number of students and staff for a new semester, the Task Force would like to encourage all university members to stay vigilant about this new severe respiratory disease. In particular, if you have travelled to Wuhan recently, please closely monitor your health condition. Should you develop a fever or cough, please wear a surgical mask, seek further medical attention promptly, and inform your doctor about your travel history. Should you have any inquiries, please contact the UHS at 3917 2514.

The CHP advises members of the public to maintain good personal and environmental hygiene to prevent Severe Respiratory Disease associated with Novel Infectious Agent:

- 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 secretion after coughing or sneezing;
- 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 or hand dryer. If hand washing facilities are not available, or when hands are not visibly soiled, hand hygiene with 70 to 80% alcohol-based handrub 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.

Also, the public should follow the preventive measures below when travelling outside Hong Kong:

- 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, inform the doctor of recent travel history and wear a surgical mask to help prevent spread of the disease.

For latest information on Severe Respiratory Disease associated with Novel Infectious Agent, please visit the following websites:

1. [The Centre for Health Protection website](#)
2. [HKU's Public Health, Pandemic and Epidemic Disease Preparedness and Response website](#)

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 8, 2020