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17 December 2003

Dear Chinese Medicine Practitioner,

### **A confirmed SARS case in Taiwan**

This morning, the health authorities in Taiwan confirmed a SARS case involving a 44-year-old man who is a researcher participating in laboratory SARS study at the Institution of Preventive Medicine at the National Defense University in Taipei. We have contacted them for more information. The man had onset of fever on 10 December 2003, and upon admission to hospital on 16 December, X-Ray examination revealed right lung pneumonia. Polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests results were positive for SARS coronavirus and a repeat of his PCR tests in another laboratory was also positive. The patient is now isolated in a designated hospital for managing SARS cases and his condition is stable. It is suspected to be a laboratory-acquired infection. The cause of the infection is still under investigation and contact tracing has been carried out. His close contacts have been required to remain at home and may be quarantined if they develop fever.

Alert level (a) is activated in Hong Kong in accordance with the Checklist of Measures to Combat SARS, which is available at the following website:  
[http://www.hwfb.gov.hk/ch/wnew/030922\\_combat\\_sars/combat\\_sars.htm](http://www.hwfb.gov.hk/ch/wnew/030922_combat_sars/combat_sars.htm).

In Hong Kong, surveillance and preventive measures against SARS have been kept in place. Stringent health screening measures at border control points are on-going. Today, the Department of Health has started distributing Health Alert Card and information leaflet to airline passengers arriving from or departing for Taiwan, and has deployed health care staff to watch out for ill persons among arriving passengers. We will closely monitor the situation.

In view of the Taiwanese experience, please maintain due vigilance in infection control measures in your health care facility and laboratory, and maintain good staff sickness records, and report to the Department of Health of any suspected SARS case or acute respiratory illness outbreak.

Advice and information for health care professionals can be found in the DH website:  
[http://www.info.gov.hk/info/sars/e\\_profession.htm](http://www.info.gov.hk/info/sars/e_profession.htm)

For prevention of SARS and respiratory tract infection, please advise your clients to adopt the following measures:

- Build up good body immunity by having a balanced diet, regular exercise and adequate rest, reducing stress and avoiding smoking;
- Maintain good personal hygiene, and wash hands after sneezing, coughing or cleaning the nose;

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- Maintain good ventilation;
- Avoid visiting crowded places with poor ventilation;
- Consult a doctor promptly if they develop respiratory symptoms;
- Put on a mask if suffering from respiratory tract infection to reduce the chance of spreading the infection to people around them; and
- Put on a mask if taking care of a patient with respiratory symptoms and wash hands thoroughly afterwards.

Yours faithfully,



(Dr Thomas TSANG)  
for Director of Health