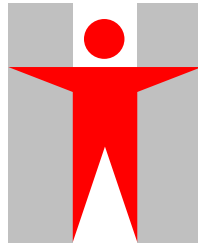


衛生署
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5 January 2004

Dear Chinese Medicine Practitioner,

A confirmed case of SARS in Guangdong

Subsequent to my letter sent to you on 27 December regarding a suspected case of SARS in Guangdong, the World Health Organisation today classified this case as a confirmed case of SARS. The patient is a 32-year-old man who worked as a television producer in Panyu (番禺), Guangzhou (廣州). He developed a fever and headache on 16 December and was diagnosed as having pneumonia on 20 December. He was isolated in hospital since then for observation. On 24 December, the patient was transferred to a hospital designated for treating SARS patient in Guangzhou. The patient has been suspected of contracted SARS since 26 December. Eighty-one contacts of the patient reportedly did not have fever. The patient reported no history of contact with health care workers or wild animals.

In Hong Kong, we are maintaining mandatory health declarations and temperature screening checks for passengers arriving from Guangdong. In addition, we are stepping up broadcasts at seaports and border check points and health information leaflets are available to travelers at the border check points. We will continue to deploy staff to assist travelers reported sick and distribute health information sheets and health alert cards to flight passengers arriving from Guangzhou.

Please take special notice of febrile patients with respiratory symptoms, who reported history of visiting Guangdong Province during 10 days before symptom onset. Please ensure that masks are worn on these patients. Furthermore, if the patient has clinical or radiological evidence of pneumonia, you may wish to refer the patient to the Accident and Emergency Department (AED) of public hospitals for assessment.

Please maintain due vigilance in infection control measures in your health care facility and maintain good staff sickness records. Important things to observe include the followings:

Environment control

- to avoid overcrowding in the patient waiting areas by scheduling patient appointment and reminding patients to adhere to it;
- to provide adequate ventilation to the clinic;

We are committed to providing quality client-oriented service.

- to clean and disinfect the environment using 1:99 household bleach at least once daily or more frequently as indicated (for places such as patient lavatories). When there is a suspected SARS case, after transferal of suspected SARS patient, immediate disinfection of affected areas using 1:49 household bleach is recommended. It is preferably to evacuate the clinic before disinfection and leave the disinfected area vacant for 30 minutes.
- to clean and disinfect equipment used in patient care; and
- to maintain proper disposal of clinical wastes.

Precaution for health care workers

- to exclude sick staff from duties and to remind them to obtain medical advice as necessary;
- to wash hands after each patient contact, change of gloves/masks, gown/white coat/uniform; and
- to wear personal protective equipment as appropriate for the setting, e.g., surgical/N95 masks, goggles, face shields, gowns, caps, gloves for high-risk procedures such as suctioning.

Precaution for patients

- to request patients and accompanying persons to inform staff when they have fever and arrange medical assessment accordingly; and
- to request patients and accompanying persons to wear surgical masks if they have symptoms of respiratory tract infection.

Advice and information for health care professionals can be found in the DH website:
http://www.info.gov.hk/info/sars/e_profession.htm

Yours faithfully,



(Dr Thomas TSANG)
for Director of Health