

Third nurse infected in hospital cluster

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Taoyuan General Hospital in the city's Taoyuan District is pictured yesterday.

Photo: CNA

The Central Epidemic Command Center (CECC) yesterday reported the fifth COVID-19 case in a cluster infection at a Taoyuan hospital, where four other medical workers were confirmed to have been infected over the past week.

The latest case is a nurse who had tested negative on Tuesday last week, Minister of Health and Welfare Chen Shih-chung (陳時中), who heads the CECC, told a news conference.

However, on Thursday, she developed symptoms, such as nasal congestion and a cough, and a second test yesterday found that she was infected, Chen said.

She is the head nurse of a ward where two doctors previously tested positive, the CECC said.

The first medical personnel to be infected — one of the doctors — most likely caught the virus from a Taiwanese man in his 60s who is being treated at the hospital after returning from the US late last month and developing a severe COVID-19 infection.

The doctor later infected his partner — a nurse at the hospital — as well as another nurse and the other doctor.

The CECC has refused to name the hospital, but Chen at yesterday's news conference accidentally revealed that it is "the ministry's Taoyuan General Hospital."

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Asked for confirmation, Chen said that the Taoyuan hospital is the site of the cluster infection.

The CECC said it would set up a command center at the hospital to monitor the situation.

Patients who were cared for by the infected medical personnel have all been transferred to single rooms, it said, adding that the hospital would not admit new inpatients nor allow hospital visits.

The CECC also reported six new imported cases of COVID-19 infection. Three of the cases are members of a Taiwanese family who live in the US and returned home on Jan. 4, Chen said.

The mother, who is in her 40s, reported symptoms such as a cough, fatigue and fever while in quarantine, and her COVID-19 test came back positive yesterday, Chen said.

Her son and daughter, both under 10 years old, also tested positive, but have been asymptomatic so far, Chen said.

One of the other cases is a Swedish man in his 50s who works in Taiwan. He traveled to the UK early last month for work, returned to Taiwan on Jan. 3 and tested negative for COVID-19 a day later.

However, a test conducted at the end of his quarantine period came back positive, Chen said.

All travelers arriving from the UK are tested for COVID-19 at the start and end of their mandatory 14-day quarantine period.

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The fifth case is a teenage student from the Philippines who arrived in Taiwan on Dec. 31 and tested positive for COVID-19 the day after her quarantine ended, Chen said.

Five people who traveled in the same vehicle with her have been quarantined, he said.

The sixth imported case is a Burmese man who works as a crew member on a ship.

He tested positive after completing 14 day of quarantine and seven days of self-health management, Chen said.

Taiwan has so far recorded 862 cases of COVID-19 infection, 762 of which are imported. Of the total, 756 people have recovered, seven have died and 99 are in hospital, CECC data showed.

Additional reporting by Lin Hui-chin and Yang Yuan-ting

Source: [Taipei Times - 2021/01/19](#)