

本署檔號 Our Ref.: (21) in DH SEB CD/8/39/1

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22 June 2006

Dear Operators / Managers / Infection control officers of residential care homes,

**Increase in noroviral gastroenteritis outbreaks
in elderly homes in May and June**

Further to our letter dated 27 May 2006, we would like to remind you that the increase in acute gastroenteritis outbreaks caused by norovirus has persisted through May into June. Since May, there were already 35 confirmed norovirus outbreaks in elderly homes affecting a total of 513 persons. These compared with 17 outbreaks in elderly homes and 179 affected persons in the first four months of this year. A total of 74 cases of noroviral gastroenteritis outbreaks in all institutions involving 999 persons have been reported so far this year. In 2005, there were a total of 42 norovirus outbreaks in all institutions, affecting 643 persons.

Gastroenteritis caused by Norovirus can occur throughout the year but is more active in the winter months. However, we have observed a prolonged norovirus season this year, mainly affecting elderly homes.

To prevent outbreak of acute gastroenteritis in your institution, I would like to draw your attention to adherence to strict personal, environmental and food hygiene as detailed in the Guidelines on Prevention of Communicable Diseases in Residential Care Homes for Elderly. In particular,

- ✧ Wash hands thoroughly before handling food and eating and after going to toilets and handling vomitus or faecal matter.
- ✧ Any vomiting episode need to be properly handled and disinfected by applying diluted bleach 1:49 to the soiled surface and neighbouring area;
- ✧ Ensure all the water closets are in proper function and toilet areas are regularly cleansed and disinfected.



Staff developing vomiting or diarrhea should be advised to refrain from work and seek medical advice. If you notice an increase in the number of residents or staff with symptoms of viral gastroenteritis, please inform the Central Notification Office of CHP as soon as possible via Fax: 2477 2770 or Tel:2477 2772. CHP will provide advice in the management of such cases and take appropriate control measures.

For more information on Norovirus, please visit the website of CHP at http://www.chp.gov.hk/content.asp?lang=en&info_id=33&id=24&pid=9

Yours sincerely,



(Dr. S K CHUANG)

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