

## Special Announcement of COVID-19 on 25 February 2020

### 1. The situation on 25 February 2020 at 8.00 a.m.

1. There are currently 15 confirmed cases of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) being treated in hospitals and 22 cases who returned to their homes, which brings the total number of coronavirus disease infection cases detected in Thailand to 37.

2. From 3 January to 25 February 2020 at 11.00 A.M., the total number of patients under investigation (PUI) increased to 1,580 people. Of those, 70 PUI were detected from the airport screening and 1,510 people sought medical services on their own at hospitals. 1,160 cases returned to their homes. Most of the PUI were infected with seasonal influenza, and 420 PUI are admitted at hospitals.

3. Regarding the international situation involving 35 countries, two administrative regions and one cruise between 5 January to 25 February 2020 at 7.00 A.M., there were 80,087 confirmed cases and 2,699 deaths, with 77,658 cases and 2,663 deaths coming from the People's Republic of China.

### 2. One case can return home and two additional cases of COVID-19.

The Ministry of Public Health (MOPH) reported two more cases of COVID-19 in Thailand. One case has recovered and can return home. Currently, Thailand has 37 cases; 22 were discharged and 15 cases are being treated at hospitals.

Dr. Sukhum Karnchanapimai, Permanent Secretary of Ministry of Public Health, Dr. Suwannachai Wattanayingcharoenchai, Director-General of Department of Diseases Control, Dr. Marut Jirasrattasiri, Director-General of Department of Thai Traditional and Alternative Medicine, Dr. Opas Karnkavinpong, Director-General of Department of Medical Sciences and Dr. Witoon Danwiboon, the Government Pharmaceutical Organization Director stated about the COVID-19 situation that today, one patient in Krabi can go back home. She is a 32 year-old Chinese woman who traveled to Thailand before the People's Republic of China closed Wuhan Tianhe International Airport (China). Today, the Department of Thai Traditional and Alternative Medicine, Department of Medical Sciences and the Government Pharmaceutical Organization signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) about *Andrographis paniculata* and COVID-19 research to find the effectiveness of *Andrographis paniculata* in for treating the virus.

Today, 25 February 2020, results from two laboratories (Department of Medical Sciences and Chulalongkorn University) confirmed two more cases. The first case is a 31 year-old housewife admitted at Rajavithi Hospital for pneumonia due to unknown causes. By taking her history the doctor learned that the patient had a family member who recently came back from China. The second case is a 29 year-old man whose job included close contact with Chinese tourists, and he came to Bamrasnaradura Institute with high fever and coughing. The disease control officers collected specimens among close contacts of those two confirmed cases for further investigation and will send the collected data and primary investigation to the group of experts in three areas (clinical management, epidemiology, and laboratory). Currently, the total number of confirmed cases is 37; 22 people (60%) were discharged and 15 patients still remain in hospitals.

The report of the new confirmed cases is the result of adjusting the criteria of the PUI case definition for COVID-19 on 18 February, 2020 which covered new at-risk countries including Japan, the Republic of Korea (South Korea), Singapore, the People's Republic of China, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, the Macau Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China,

Taiwan and eight provinces in Thailand including Bangkok, Chiang Mai, Chiang Rai, Samut Prakan, Krabi, Phuket, Chon Buri, Prachuap Khiri Khan.

Thailand has screened 3,141,879 travelers (as of 24 February 2020) at land border checkpoints, seaports, airports and the Immigration Bureau. There's also surveillance at hospitals and communities. The total number of PUI is 1,580. There are 420 cases quarantined at hospitals and 1,160 have been discharged.

Announcing COVID-19 to be the 14<sup>th</sup> Dangerous Infectious Diseases will be beneficial for prevention and control implementation to prevent people from the disease. This announcement will allow health officers and staff at the hospital to easily apply the measures under the law to provide treatment to people and to reduce the widespread transmission. Plus, it is beneficial for the people in the community to be updated the outbreak situation rapidly.

People are recommended to postpone or avoid travel to outbreak areas. However, if it is necessary for someone to visit an outbreak area, they should comply with the MOPH's recommendations including avoiding visiting crowded places, wearing a mask, and washing hands frequently. When travelers arrive from the affected areas, they are recommended to self-quarantine and monitor their symptoms for 14 days (and separate yourself from other family members). If anyone develops symptoms including fever, coughing or sneezing, please seek medical advice at the hospital immediately.

### **3. The daily recommendations for preventing COVID-19**

It is recommended to frequently wash hands with water and soap or alcohol gel, avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth if not necessary, strictly comply with the recommendations "eat cooked food, use serving spoons and wash hands," and wear clean, cloth hygienic masks when in crowded areas. The patients or people who have symptoms of coughing or sneezing should wear surgical masks to prevent the spread of infection. Staff and healthcare workers who have close contact with patients should wear an N95 mask

### **4. Recommendation to the Public**

4.1 If anyone has symptoms including fever, sore throat, respiratory tract infection symptoms such as runny nose, cough, reproductive cough, tachypnea or dyspnea within 14 days after departing from a risk or affected area, they should wear a hygienic mask, wash their hands and seek medical care at a nearby hospital or meet public health officers immediately, and inform the healthcare workers of their travel history to reduce the risk of complications from pneumonia progressing to severe or fatal outcomes.

4.2 A person with an underlying disease should avoid traveling outbound, where there is an ongoing outbreak. If this is unavoidable, people should avoid making contact with patients who have respiratory symptoms, avoid visiting markets selling live animals and having close contact with animals, especially with sick or dead animals.

4.3 For the general public, please take care of yourself during seasonal changes and comply with the recommendations "eat cooked food, use serving spoons, wash hands," and wear masks while coughing, sneezing, and avoid making contact with patients who have respiratory symptoms.