

Tuberculosis in the school setting in Hong Kong from Jan to December 2019

From Jan 2019 to Dec 2019, the Department of Health (DH) received notification of 4051 (provisional figure) tuberculosis (TB) cases, of which 191 (4.7%) were aged 3 to 24 years (usual school age). The corresponding proportion in 2018 was 5.8%.

According to the data as of 31 March 2020, there were a total of 4 clusters of TB cases in the school setting from Jan to Dec 2019, comprising 14 subjects. Three of the 4 clusters were from tertiary institutions. One was from secondary school. The cluster size ranged from 2 to 6 cases, with a median of 3.5 cases. Genotyping showed that only one cluster was bacteriologically linked.

DH will continue to promote awareness of TB and its prevention in schools, the general community as well as the health care sector so as to facilitate early diagnosis to allow effective control of this airborne infectious disease at its very source.