Dear friends!

Over the past 24 hours five more persons have been tested positive for COVID-19. Among them are four men (age range 45-49 years) and one 55-year old woman who is a medical care worker. One patient has been hospitalized to Oleksandrivska hospital, four are receiving home care.

Currently, the total number of coronavirus cases in Kyiv is 107. As of today’s morning, almost 1,900 Kyivans have been rapidly tested, more 813 - laboratory tested and more 218 cases are currently being validated by the Health Ministry’s Central Reference Laboratory. Let me also note that our hospitals started testing all patients with pneumonia diagnosis for coronavirus, since pneumonia is a common complication for COVID-19.

I cannot thank enough to the Kyiv healthcare workers, who are risking their own lives to provide care and treatment, and save the lives of the others. The Kyiv City Council has already allocated more budget funding for the public healthcare
amidst the coronavirus outbreak. The city will spend about ₴894 million on a pay increase for the medical staff of all municipal hospitals. As from April medical workers on the front lines of the outbreak will earn an extra ₴5,000 - ₴10,000 per month.

Once again I am urging everyone to take good care of yourself. If you feel unwell, please call your family doctor. If you feel sick and think you have the coronavirus, please call an ambulance. It is all about your own health and the safety of people around you.

We cannot protect those who refuse to obey the coronavirus restrictions, refuse to self-isolate after travelling or hide they had been in contact with the infected persons. But we have to protect others from the irresponsible behaviour of their peers.

With this in mind, we have set up a centre which will monitor how people with mild symptoms and the contacts of people known to be infected comply with stay home order. It will also ensure that those have returned from the coronavirus-hit countries are self-isolating. The Centre obtains information from primary care physicians, experts of the Health Ministry’s central reference laboratory, police officers and state border guards to create a local database to track down all possible ways of the virus spread. The Centre will also help provide infected persons with medical treatment.

So far the database contains information about 37,000 Kyivans who entered the country as of March 11, 435 Kyivans who had contacts with people sick with COVID-19 and 107 confirmed coronavirus cases. Mind, the Centre works already.

Any person who violates the stay home order, self-isolation rule or refuse medical observation will face up a ₴17,000 fine for a first violation. Further breaches will lead to ₴34,000 fine and criminal charges.

I urge Kyivans to report the suspected cases. It is no easy task which requires everyone’s efforts. But this is the only way to slow and stop the spread of the virus.

Those who do not take the restrictions seriously must pay for it. This is my strong belief. At the moment the police impose administrative penalties on persons who violate the restrictions. Soon local authoritative bodies will join in and issue fines of up to ₴3,400.
As you know, following the best practices of other countries, Ukraine’s government orders all Ukrainians returning from overseas to face 14 days of medical observation. From the very start, the Kyiv local government advocates the necessity of such a step. We set up quarantine centres at two city’s hospitals. One of them can hold up to 200 individuals. These stations are equipped and staffed to ensure the observation care which is free for patients.

Let me emphasize that the decision to place the Ukrainian citizens who returned to Ukraine yesterday and the day before under a mandatory medical observation rests with the national government rather than the Kyiv local authority. We have not been consulted about it. But still, the Kyiv health facilities are prepared and ready to house up all Kyivans should they need being watched.

I want to remind you again. Please, respect the restrictions! They are aimed at protecting your health and life!

Take good care of yourself!

Yours,

Vitali Klitschko