

本署檔號 Our Ref. : (49) in DH SEB CD/8/93/1

21 January 2013

Dear doctors,

**Updated Reporting Criteria for Severe Respiratory
Disease associated with Novel Coronavirus**

Further to our letter to you dated 3 December, 2012 regarding the inclusion of Jordan as a newly affected area, we would like to update you that the World Health Organisation (WHO) has revised the interim case definition of severe respiratory disease associated with novel coronavirus on 16 January, 2013.

According to WHO, the number of reported confirmed cases of human infection with novel coronavirus remains nine and the novel coronavirus has now been confirmed in Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Jordan since April of 2012. The infections in all three countries appear to have been locally acquired. Patients have generally presented with pneumonia, though a significant proportion have also had renal failure. In two instances, infections have occurred in a cluster, one in a family in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, and one among health care workers in a hospital near Amman, Jordan. Although the clusters raise concerns about the possibility of human-to-human transmission, there is currently no definitive evidence that this has happened. The source of the virus, its total geographic extent, the spectrum of illness, and the mode of transmission are currently unknown. To address these key issues, WHO recommended that patients who reside in or have history of travel to the Arabian Peninsula or neighboring countries within 10 days before onset of illness, should be carefully investigated and tested for novel coronavirus.

In this connection, medical practitioners are reminded to notify the Department of Health any suspected cases of severe respiratory disease associated with novel coronavirus, **who reside in or have history of travel to the Arabian Peninsula or neighboring countries** and fulfilling the reporting criteria (<https://ceno.chp.gov.hk/casedef/casedef.pdf>) to the Central Notification Office (CENO) of CHP via fax (2477 2770), phone (2477 2772) or CENO On-line. Please also call our Medical Control Officer at 7116 3300 a/c 9179 outside office



hour for prompt investigation. The updated reporting criteria for Severe Respiratory Disease associated with Novel Coronavirus is attached in Appendix for your reference. They are also available on CENO On-line website (<http://ceno.chp.gov.hk/>).

Apart from the statutory notification of severe respiratory disease associated with novel coronavirus as mentioned above, please also consider testing for novel coronavirus for unexplained pneumonia after exclusion of common causative agents, regardless of the travel history. Laboratory testing of novel coronavirus is available in Public Health Laboratory Centre (PHLC) of the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) and please contact the Virology Division of PHLC for necessary arrangement.

Thank you for your ongoing support in combating communicable diseases.

Yours faithfully,



(Dr. SK CHUANG)
for Controller, Centre for Health Protection
Department of Health

Appendix

Reporting criteria for Severe Respiratory Disease associated with Novel Coronavirus

An individual fulfilling both the *Clinical Criteria* **AND** *Epidemiological Criteria* should be reported to CHP for further investigation.

Clinical Criteria

A person with acute respiratory syndrome which may include fever ($\geq 38^{\circ}\text{C}$, 100.4°F) and cough

- requiring hospitalization

OR

- with suspicion of lower airway involvement (clinical or radiological evidence of consolidation) not explained by any other infection or any other aetiology

AND

Epidemiological criteria:

One or more of the followings within 10 days before onset of illness

- close physical contact* with a confirmed or probable case of novel coronavirus infection while the case was ill

OR

- Residence in or history of travel to the Arabian Peninsula or neighboring countries**

***Close contact is defined as:**

- Anyone who provided care for the patient, including a health care worker or family member, or who had other similarly close physical contact;
- Anyone who stayed at the same place (e.g. lived with, visited) as a probable or confirmed case while the case was ill.

******These refer to areas/countries bounded by Iran, Turkey and Egypt (including Iran, but not Turkey and Egypt)

References:

World Health Organization http://www.who.int/csr/disease/coronavirus_infections/case_definition/en/index.html

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): Bahrain, Iraq, Iran, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Palestinian territories, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Yemen
<http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/ncv/case-def.html>

European Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (ECDC): Jordan, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Oman, Yemen, Syria, Lebanon, Occupied Palestinian territories and Israel
<http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/publications/Publications/20121207-Novel-coronavirus-rapid-risk-assessment.pdf>