

本署檔號 Our Ref. : (9) in DH SEB CD/8/93/1 Pt.2

16 May, 2013

Dear Medical Superintendent,

**Latest Situation on Severe Respiratory Disease associated
with Novel Coronavirus**

Further to our letter to you dated 13 May 2013, we would like to provide you with the latest situation on Severe Respiratory Disease associated with Novel Coronavirus (NCoV).

Since 23 September 2012 (as of 15 May 2013), a total of 40 patients have been confirmed suffering from Severe Respiratory Disease associated with NCoV worldwide, including 30 from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), three from the United Kingdom (UK), two from Qatar, two from Jordan, two from France and one from the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Most patients are male (79%; 30 of 38 cases with sex reported) and aged from 24 to 94 years (median 56 years). The first case had onset of illness in late March or early April 2012; whereas the most recent case reported had onset on 8 May 2013. Most patients presented with severe acute respiratory disease requiring hospitalization and eventually required mechanical ventilation or other advanced respiratory support. To date, the case fatality rate is around 50%.

As of 15 May, a total of six clusters were identified and three clusters involved health care facilities in Jordan, KSA and France. Since the beginning of May 2013, a total of 21 patients have been reported from the outbreak primarily linked to a health care facility in the Eastern part of KSA. This outbreak, involved 16 males and 5 females, with patients age ranged 24 to 94 years old. The date of onset of illness was from 6 April to 8 May 2013. Majority of the patients were reported to have one or more comorbid medical conditions. Among these 21 patients, two were family members of two patients from that facility and two were health care workers that had been diagnosed with NCoV infection after exposure to patients. Investigation by the KSA government is ongoing.



At present, the reservoir, mode of transmission and the extent of infection in the community are still being investigated by the World Health Organization and relevant health authorities. There is so far no evidence of sustain generalised transmission in communities.

In view of the recent clusters occurred in health care facilities, health care workers and hospitals are reminded of the importance of systematic implementation of infection prevention and control. Health care providers are also advised to be vigilant among recent travelers returning from areas affected by the virus who develop severe acute respiratory infections. Specimens from patients' lower respiratory tracts should be obtained for diagnosis where possible. Clinicians are reminded that NCoV infection should be considered even with atypical signs and symptoms in patients who are significantly immune compromised.

In addition, medical practitioners are reminded to notify the Department of Health any suspected cases of Severe Respiratory Disease associated with NCoV, fulfilling the reporting criteria (<https://ceno.chp.gov.hk/casedef/casedef.pdf>) to the Central Notification Office (CENO) of the Centre for Health Protection (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.

Apart from the statutory notification of Severe Respiratory Disease associated with NCoV as mentioned above, please also consider testing for NCoV for unexplained pneumonia after exclusion of common causative agents, regardless of the travel history. Laboratory testing of NCoV is available in Public Health Laboratory Centre (PHLC) of 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