



本署檔號 Our Ref.: (11) in DH PHND/17-9/1

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3 June 2015

Dear Nurses / Midwives,

Latest Situation of Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) in Korea

In relation to the outbreak of Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) in Korea, I would like to provide you with the information of the latest situation in Korea.

As at 2 June 2015, the health authority of Korea has reported a total of 24 MERS cases. In addition, one case who acquired the infection in Korea before travelling to Huizhou, Guangdong via Hong Kong was confirmed by Mainland China. Most secondary cases were in-patients or visitors who had contact with the index case (68-year-old man) in the hospital during the period from May 15 – 17. Two other cases were in-patients who stayed in the same ward with another confirmed MERS case in another hospital from May 28 – 30. These two cases did not have direct contact with the index and could be regarded as tertiary cases.

Among the 25 MERS cases in this outbreak, two deaths have been reported by Korea involving a 71-year-old man and a 58-year-old woman (as of 2 June). Both had chronic medical diseases.

In view of this evolving situation in Korea, the public are advised to avoid unnecessary visit, including exchange programmes, to healthcare facilities in Seoul, Korea. It is also important to have stringent infection control in the hospital settings. Healthcare professionals should apply standard precautions consistently with all patients in all work practices at all times. Droplet precautions should be added when providing care to patients with symptoms of acute respiratory infection. Contact precautions and eye protection should be added when caring for probable or confirmed MERS cases, and airborne precautions should be applied when performing aerosol-generating procedures.

/ Moreover ...

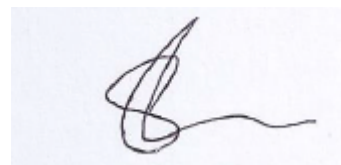
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aspire to be an internationally renowned public health authority***

Moreover, you may wish to know that the reporting criteria for suspected case of MERS have already been revised to include one additional epidemiological criterion, i.e. ***visited a healthcare facility in Seoul, Korea.*** Any persons fulfilling the clinical criteria as well as the epidemiological criteria are regarded as a suspected case and should be reported to the Centre for Health Protection for prompt investigation.

As a way of protecting healthcare professionals at workplaces, you are reminded to observe strictly infection control measures in healthcare settings when managing suspected cases and keep abreast of latest situation of MERS for advising patients or clients suitably.

Thank you for your unfailing support in prevention and control of communicable diseases.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'S. Tsui', written on a light blue background.

(Ms Shirley TSUI)
for Director of Health