

本署檔號 Our Ref. : (137) in DH SEB CD/8/97/1 Pt.9

13 March 2017

Dear Medical Superintendent,

Revised list of countries and areas with ongoing Zika virus transmission

We would like to draw your attention to the latest Zika virus situation report published by World Health Organization (WHO) on 10 March 2017, in which a new classification scheme of countries and areas affected by Zika Virus Infection (ZVI) was adopted.

According to the situation report, WHO, the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, have developed a new classification scheme which serves to categorise countries and areas according to the presence of and potential for vector-borne Zika virus transmission. The new scheme classifies countries and areas into four categories instead of three categories adopted in the previous classification. The four categories are as follows:

Category 1: area with new introduction or re-introduction with ongoing transmission

Category 2: area either with evidence of virus circulation before 2015 or area with ongoing transmission that is no longer in the new or re-introduction phase, but where there is no evidence of interruption

Category 3: area with interrupted transmission and with potential for future transmission

Category 4: area with established competent vector (*Aedes aegypti*) but no known documented past or current transmission



Based on the defined criteria and expert review, some countries and areas were reclassified and some were classified for the first time, bringing the total number of affected countries and areas under the new scheme to 148. You may wish to refer to the following link for the whole situation report:

<http://www.who.int/emergencies/zika-virus/situation-report/10-march-2017/en/>.

In Hong Kong, our existing risk assessment and recommendations on the prevention and control of ZVI remained the same. Countries and areas classified under Categories 1 and 2 in WHO's new classification scheme are regarded as those with ongoing Zika virus transmission (affected areas). Further details of the affected areas can be found at the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) website (http://www.chp.gov.hk/en/view_content/43209.html).

Due to high volume of international travel, there is a high risk of importation of Zika virus to Hong Kong. To prevent local spread of the disease, early laboratory investigation is extremely important to identify any cases promptly to allow timely implementation of control measures such as vector control. In this regard, please be reminded that blood and urine tests are advised for those clinically suspected of ZVI, in particular those with travel history to affected areas. Please report **confirmed** cases immediately to the Central Notification Office (CENO) of CHP via fax (2477 2770) using the reporting form, phone (2477 2772) or CENO On-line (https://cdis.chp.gov.hk/CDIS_CENO_ONLINE/ceno.html). If you report any case outside office hours, please call our Medical Control Officer at 7116 3300 a/c 9179 for prompt investigation.

Please draw the attention of the healthcare professionals and supporting staff in your institution/ working with you to the above. Thank you for your continuous support in combating infectious diseases.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Yonnie LAM', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

(Dr. Yonnie LAM)
for Controller, Centre for Health Protection
Department of Health