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Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC)

Emergency Teleconference

Novel Coronavirus

Friday 24 January 2020 12.00 – 13.00 AEDT

Outcomes

Members attending	
Prof Brendan Murphy	Commonwealth Chief Medical Officer
Ms Alison McMillan	Chief Nurse and Midwifery Officer
Dr Andrew Robertson	Chief Health Officer, Western Australia
Dr Chris Lease	A/g Chief Public Health Officer, South Australia
Dr Angie Bone	A/g Deputy Chief Health Officer, Victoria
Dr Kerry Chant	Chief Health Officer, New South Wales
Dr Jeremy McAnulty	Executive Director, Health Protection, New South Wales
Dr Alun Richards	Department of Health, Queensland
Dr Sonya Bennett	Chair, CDNA
Dr Mark Veitch	Chief Health Officer, Tasmania
Dr Kerryn Coleman	Chief Health Officer, Australian Capital Territory
Dr Hugh Heggie	Chief Health Officer, Northern Territory
A/Prof Dianne Stephens	Deputy Chief Health Officer, Northern Territory Medical Director, NCCTRC
Ms Nicole Curtis	Defence
Dr Vicki Krauss	Director, Centre for Disease Control, NT Department of Health
Ms Harriet Care	Public Health, New Zealand Ministry of Health
Apologies	
A/Prof Nicola Spurrier	Chief Health Officer, South Australia
Dr Brett Sutton	Chief Health Officer, Victoria
Dr Jeannette Young	Chief Health Officer, Queensland
Department of Health	
Ms Celia Street	First Assistant Secretary, Office of Health Protection
Ms Rhonda Owen	Assistant Secretary, Health Emergency Management Branch
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Dr Anthony Moore	Medical Officer NIR
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Invited Experts

Dr Mike Catton	VIDRL
Professor Jodie McVernon	University of Melbourne
Lyn Gilbert	Director, Infection Prevention and Control, Institute of Clinical Pathology, University of Sydney
Ben Howden	Chair, PHLN

Latest Epidemiology and WHO information

Dr Rebecca Newton provided Members with the most current information on both confirmed cases and deaths from 2019-nCoV on both mainland China and other countries.

Total: 844 confirmed cases globally (24.01.2020 12:00AM)

- 830 on mainland China (29 Provinces affected)
- 14 other countries
- 25 Deaths
- 34 patients recovered

Cases have been reported in Thailand, Japan, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, Taipei Municipality, China, Macau Special Administrative Region, United States of America and the Republic of Korea.

Transmission

- CFR 4%
- Severity 25%
- $R_0 = 1.4 - 2.5$
- 4th generation cases in Wuhan
- 2nd generation cases outside Wuhan

Members noted that there is more than likely a greater number of cases than actually reflected in the confirmed cases and that a caveat should be placed around the CFR. The CFR would likely be lower if the actual number of cases was known.

Members also noted that when referring to severity and CFR they should talk about cases and deaths as well as significant number of cases reported rather than a CFR.

The CMO advised members that the World Health Organization (WHO) has assessed the risk of this event to be very high in China, high at the regional level and moderate at the global level. At this stage a Public Health Event of International Concern (PHEIC) has not been declared.

The WHO will also send another mission to Wuhan, Hebei Province, to see if they can discover the source of the virus.

CDNA update

Dr Sonya Bennett provided an update on the work undertaken by CDNA on the development of the interim Novel Coronavirus 2019 (2019-nCoV) Series of National Guidelines for Public Health Units (SoNG). The document summarises interim recommendation for surveillance, infection control, laboratory testing and contact management for 2019-nCoV.

Members noted that the document is classified as interim because the situation is changing so rapidly that the document will be reviewed and updated regularly. Members also noted that

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infection control section requires further work. CDNA will be discussing this at the 2.30pm meeting.

Members reviewed the issue of the exclusion of children who are contacts of confirmed cases from school and noted that the exclusion would apply to primary and secondary school teachers also. The rationale being that this would prevent the spread of the disease to school children who are unable to self-monitor. Adult students attending University or Technical Colleges would be expected to self-monitor as adults.

Action: CDNA to share a rationale for the “exclusion of children rather than adults” to AHPPC.

The interim 2019-nCoV SoNG has been distributed to State/Territory contacts for dissemination to Public Health Units. This document is available on the Department of Health website:

<https://www1.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/cdna-song-novel-coronavirus.htm>

A supplementary webpage has been created which lists areas with evidence of sustained human-to-human transmission of 2019-nCoV. The interim 2019-nCoV SoNG refers to this and it will be updated regularly:

<https://www1.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/ohp-2019-nCoV-areas.htm>

Action: Professor Lyn Gilbert to organise a group to review infection control issues such as the use of P2 masks and how long they can be used before being replaced.

Laboratory testing update

Dr Mike Catton provided members with an update on laboratory capacity noting that the PHLN guidance on laboratory testing for 2019-nCoV can be found on the Department of Health website.

Members noted that:

- there is currently no access to the virus yet;
- s47C

Response activities update

Ms Rhonda Owen provided members with an update on the current response activities being undertaken by the National Incident Room including:

- 2019-NCoV – listed human disease;
- messaging at the borders;
- communications – website and social media
- Public Health Information Line scripts
- Advice to Primary Health
- NIR SitReps
- Smarttraveller updates

The most current information can be found in the daily SitRep.

Action: Health to speak to cruise line companies regarding messaging.

Members noted that the NIR will be producing SitReps and WoG talking points over the weekend and these will be disseminated to the relevant committees and that meetings would be called as required.

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