

Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC)
Outcomes of AHPPC Emergency teleconference – 2019 novel coronavirus
Tuesday 28 January 2020
Teleconference

1800 – 1855

Members attending:

Prof Brendan Murphy	Chair, Chief Medical Officer
Dr Brett Sutton	Victoria (VIC)
Dr Jeanette Young	Queensland (QLD)
Dr Kerryn Coleman	Australian Capital Territory (ACT)
Dr Hugh Heggie	Northern Territory (NT)
Dr Mark Veitch	Tasmania (TAS)
Dr Kerry Chant	New South Wales (NSW)
Dr Andrew Robertson	Western Australia (WA)
Dr Nicola Spurrier	South Australia (SA)
Dr Sonya Bennett	Chair, Communicable Disease Network Australia (CDNA)
Dr Di Stephens	Northern Territory (NT)

Department of Health (Health):

Ms Celia Street	First Assistant Secretary, Office of Health Protection (OHP)
Ms Rhonda Owen	Assistant Secretary, Health Emergency Management Branch (HEMB), OHP

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1. Meeting opening

1.

1 Welcome and apologies

The Chair opened the meeting at 18:00 by welcoming members and taking a roll call of the attendees.

2. Update

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Prof Murphy gave a general update of the Coronavirus situation noting the rapid expansion of both reporting and increasing cases from China; and other countries reporting cases..

He also noted the 5 confirmed cases in Australia now reported as stable. Other jurisdictions testing for the virus reported that all were negative except one in Victoria awaiting results overnight.

3. Education

Members discussed the issues arising in the Education sector, especially with decisions made by independent schools.

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Prof Murphy noted that AHPPC are continuing to seek further information and that WHO has not changed its advice at this stage.

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AHPPC members endorsed guidance on time periods for contact tracing.

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. Members also agreed that the case definition should be specific, while general guidance should have a broader reference to mainland China but particularly Hubei province.

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Action

- Nil.

2.2 Factsheets and guidance documents

Dr Bennet noted that CDNA had approved a range of factsheets, including for schools and universities. She specified that the factsheets approved by CDNA for schools and universities had different exclusion guidance for children and tertiary students.

Members agreed that it was appropriate for different exclusion criteria to be applied to children and adult students, noting their differing capacity for identifying the onset of illness and take action accordingly. Members noted that factsheets would be published on the Health website on 28 January 2020.

Action

- Nil.

2.2 Repatriation

Dr Bennet noted that CDNA had agreed that asymptomatic children repatriated from Hubei province did not need to be excluded, and should be subject to the interim CDNA guidance as standard.

The Chair proposed that similar measures be put in place for the arrival of flights with repatriated Australians as were implemented for the direct Wuhan to Sydney flight. Members agreed that meeting the aircraft and providing screening and information through an on-site clinical presence would be sensible. Dr Young also noted that it would be necessary for jurisdictions to consider ongoing local monitoring measures to capture asymptomatic cases.

Action

- Nil.

2.2 Working group

Dr Gilbert noted that a working group had been established under CDNA to consider matters related to infection control that may relate to 2019-nCoV s22 purpose. AHPPC members

endorsed the establishment of the working group, noting the groups would meet in the week commencing 27 January 2020. Matters for consideration include cleaning of spaces where a confirmed case has attended, disposal of hospital items such as PPE, and storage and disposal of corpses.

Action

- AHPPC members endorsed the working group.

3. Other business

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Professor Murphy noted that announcements are being rolled out at air and sea ports, and on vessels and aircraft, providing information about signs and symptoms of coronavirus and actions to undertake if feeling unwell.

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The meeting closed at 1520 AEDT.

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