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Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC)

Emergency Teleconference

Novel Coronavirus

Wednesday 29 January 2020 13.30 – 14.30 AEDT

Outcomes

Members attending	
Prof Brendan Murphy	Commonwealth Chief Medical Officer
Prof Paul Kelly	Assistant Commonwealth Chief Medical Officer
Ms Allison McMillan	Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officer
Dr Andrew Robertson	Chief Health Officer, Western Australia
A/Prof Nicola Spurrier	Chief Health Officer, South Australia
Dr Brett Sutton	Chief Health Officer, Victoria
Dr Jeremy McAnulty	Director, Health Protection, New South Wales
Dr Jeannette Young	Chief Health Officer, Queensland
Dr Scott McEwan	Acting Chief Health Officer, Tasmania
Dr Kerryn Coleman	Chief Health Officer, ACT
Nicole Curtis	ADF
Mr Rob Cameron	EMA
Dr Hugh Heggie	Chief Health Officer, Northern Territory
Invited Experts	
Dr Mike Catton	VIDRL
Professor Jodie McVernon	University of Melbourne
Dr Christine Selvey	NSW Department of Health
Professor Allen Cheng	Director, Infection, Prevention and Healthcare Epidemiology Unit, Alfred Health
Professor Lyn Gilbert	Director, Infection Prevention and Control, Institute of Clinical Pathology, University of Sydney
Department of Health	
Ms Celia Street	First Assistant Secretary, Office of Health Protection
Ms Rhonda Owen	Assistant Secretary, Health Emergency Management Branch
Dr Gary Lum	Medical Officer, MSAU
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Dr Anthony Moore	Medical Officer, MSAU
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Welcome

The CMO welcomed members and gave an overview of the current situation.

Pre- symptomatic Transmission

Members discussed the possibility of transmission of the coronavirus whilst asymptomatic noting that there is currently limited data that supports the transmission of virus 48 hours before symptoms develop.

Professor Allen Cheng advised members of two clusters (Germany and Japan) where people had been infected with coronavirus without having been in China. The cluster of cases (4 confirmed, 10 testing) in Germany were participants in a workshop being presented by a lady from China. The presenter was well during the workshop however developed symptoms 48 hours after the workshop and had had very little physical contact with the participants.

The confirmed case in Japan was a bus driver who had been in contact with a group of 31 tourists from Wuhan.

CDNA update

Ms Christine Selvey provided members with an update on the CDNA recommendations for the management of contacts of confirmed cases.

- Contacts of confirmed cases would be quarantined for 14 days following exposure.

Repatriation of Australian's from Wuhan

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Statement on Novel Coronavirus

Members discussed and agreed on the following advice to be included in the Statement on Novel Coronavirus on behalf of the AHPPC.

AHPPC provides the following advice to Australian Community following advice from the Communicable Diseases Network Australia

AHPPC is aware of:

- very recent cases of novel coronavirus who are asymptomatic or minimally symptomatic, and
- reports of one case of probable transmission from a pre-symptomatic case to other people, two days prior to the onset of symptoms.

These data are very limited and preliminary and AHPPC still believes that most infections are transmitted by people with symptomatic disease. However, AHPPC believes that we should take a highly precautionary approach and is making the following new recommendations:

1. People who have been in contact with any confirmed novel coronavirus cases must be isolated in their home for 14 days following exposure;
2. Returned travellers who have been in Hubei Province of China must be isolated in their home for 14 days after leaving Hubei Province, other than for seeking individual medical care.

Given the lower number of cases in China reported outside of Hubei province, we do not currently recommend self-isolation for travellers from other parts of China or other countries.

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We are closely monitoring the development of cases outside of Hubei province and will update this advice if necessary.

AHPPC recognises that the evidence for pre-symptomatic transmission is currently limited, and this policy is highly precautionary. At this time, the aim of this policy is containment of novel coronavirus and the prevention of person to person transmission within Australia. Further details of the extent of pre-symptomatic transmission is being monitored, and may result in changes to policy.

Summary of evidence to support the revised advice

New international evidence suggest that asymptomatic or minimally symptomatic infection can occur, and that pre-symptomatic transmission has occurred in at least one case cluster.

1. German case cluster:[s47F](#)
2. A 10 year old child reported in a case series was noted as having no fever; although it is likely that this case may have had a cough sufficient to produce PCR positive sputum.
3. [s47F](#)
4. Several Chinese language media reports have detailed transmission from pre-symptomatic cases, but no confirmatory evidence has been published.
5. WHO Sitrep (#8) states that 3 of 58 cases diagnosed outside China were asymptomatic.

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