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Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC)

Emergency Teleconference

Novel Coronavirus

Thursday
30 January 2020 14:00 – 15:00 AEDT

Agenda

Members attending	
Prof Brendan Murphy	Commonwealth Chief Medical Officer
Dr Andrew Robertson	Chief Health Officer, Western Australia
A/Prof Nicola Spurrier	Chief Health Officer, South Australia
Dr Angie Bone	A/g Chief Health Officer, Victoria
Dr Kerry Chant	Chief Health Officer, New South Wales
Dr Jeremy McAnulty	Director, Health Protection, New South Wales
Dr Jeannette Young	Chief Health Officer, Queensland
Dr Mark Veitch	Chief Health Officer, Tasmania
Dr Kerryn Coleman	Chief Health Officer, ACT
R/Adm Sarah Sharkey	Commander Joint Health and Surgeon General, ADF
Mr Rob Cameron	EMA
Dr Hugh Heggie	Chief Health Officer, Northern Territory
Department of Health	
Prof Paul Kelly	Assistant Commonwealth Chief Medical Officer
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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Invited Experts	
Dr Mike Catton	VIDRL
Professor Jodie McVernon	University of Melbourne
Dr Sonya Bennett	Chair, CDNA
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
Ms Dianne Stephens	NCCTRC – NT Health

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Welcome

The CMO welcomed members and gave an overview of the current cases of 2019-nCoV.

- 7813 – confirmed cases
- 170 – deaths
- 102 - exported cases
- **s** – Australia

Cases by Jurisdiction 30.01.2020

State or Territory	Confirmed cases	Cases being tested	Negative cases
WA	0	2	0
SA	0	15	8
VIC	s	0	0
NSW	s	50	0
QLD	s	86	0
TAS	0	2	1
ACT	0	6	0
NT	0	0	0

Accommodation/Hotel Advice

Members discussed and agreed the content of the CMO's letter to go to hotel and tourism operators which will include factsheets for hotels, hotel staff and hotel guests. The factsheet outlines the special restrictions that apply for self-isolated guests and staff attending the guests.

(Final letter content at the end of outcomes)

Infection Control

Professor Gilbert updated members in the work being undertaken by the infection control working group regarding the use of masks including which masks to use during aerosol generated procedures.

Members also discussed the cleaning of response vehicles including aircraft following transportation of suspected or confirmed cases of 2019 nCoV. Dr Lum noted that the AHMPPI has a section on cleaning vehicle including aircraft that would be suitable.

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Modelling scenario

Professor McVernon and Professor Cheng gave an update on modelling being undertaken on the containment of the virus. The modelling will look at predictions around the epidemic including the reproductive rate, case fatality rate, case importation risks, transmission and asymptomatic transmission.

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THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 1989 (C/TH)
BY THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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Chief Medical Officer

Dear hotel and tourism operators,

As you will be aware, we have updated medical advice regarding the novel coronavirus infection (2019-nCoV).

I am sure that this has caused some concern amongst your industry and I am writing to provide some early advice and guidance.

It is most important to note that the experts still believe this virus is, in the great majority of cases, only passed on to others from people who are unwell with symptoms of infection. There is very limited information to suggest that occasionally people may have spread the virus late in the incubation period in the days before they become unwell or develop an infection without obvious symptoms.

While we are assessing this new data, out of an abundance of caution, we are recommending that well people, who might be incubating the virus, avoid public spaces and isolate themselves in their home or, in the case of tourists, in their hotel rooms. As an added precaution, we are suggesting that this isolation should be for 14 days, although we believe that the average incubation period before symptoms develop is likely to be closer to one week.

This recommendation applies to anyone who has been a close contact with a confirmed case of the virus or has left the Hubei province of China less than 14 days ago. Given that China effectively locked down Hubei province a week ago, most people from there will already have been here a week.

Clearly if you have one of these guests in your property, there will be concerns expressed by the staff. I would like to reassure you and your staff that we still believe that these people are unlikely to be infectious if they are well. If they become unwell, they must seek medical attention, after first phoning ahead to the hospital or doctor to get advice. Staff should avoid contact with any one of these guests who becomes unwell and seek the appropriate medical advice.

Most, if not all, of these guests will be well and, as indicated above, we believe (on current evidence) most unlikely to be infectious. Given our precautionary approach, however, we make the following recommendations for staff in relation to well people during this isolation period:

1. Staff should avoid close contact with these guests but it is safe to be in the same room (at a distance) without protective gear when delivering food, which we

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recommend that the guests have in their room.

2. Cleaning staff should also avoid close contact. They should wear gloves and use alcohol hand rub before and after wearing gloves. As an added precaution your cleaning staff may wish to wear a surgical mask while cleaning the room.
3. Please reinforce to staff that we believe these people are very unlikely to transmit or develop infection if they have remained well.

Practising good hand and sneeze/cough hygiene is the best defence against most viruses. Please also encourage all staff to:

1. wash their hands often with soap and water before and after eating as well as after attending the toilet
2. avoid contact with others (including touching, kissing, hugging, and other intimate contact)
3. cough and sneeze into their elbow.

If staff become concerned about guests not following health advice, they should contact their state or territory public health authority on the below numbers:

- ACT call 02 5124 9213 during business hours or (02) 9962 4155 after hours
- NSW call 1300 066 055
- NT call 08 8922 8044
- Qld call 13HEALTH (13 43 25 84)
- SA call 1300 232 272
- Tas call 1800 671 738
- Vic call 1300 651 160
- WA visit <https://www.healthywa.wa.gov.au/> or call your local [public health unit](#)

The Australian health system is very well prepared to manage a situation such as this and I appreciate your ongoing support and direct contribution to the collective response.

Further information on this emerging situation including a factsheet for the general public or your customers can be found on www.health.gov.au.

Thank you so much for your

help. Kind regards

Professor Brendan Murphy
Chief Medical Officer
30 January 2020

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