

17 June 2009

SPECIAL EDITION: LAO PDR CONFIRMS FIRST A/H1N1 CASE

Human infections of influenza A (H1N1):

Perspective from WHO Lao P.D.R. (update 22)

Available online at: www.unlao.org/H1N1/influenzah1n1.asp

First case of A/H1N1 confirmed in Lao PDR

Lao PDR's first case of new influenza A (H1N1) was confirmed on Tuesday, 16 June 2009, by the National Center for Laboratory and Epidemiology (NCLE). The affected person has not required hospitalisation and is currently isolated at home. He is reported by health services to be "doing well". The identity of the person has not been made public in accordance with government and WHO privacy rules.

A sample was collected from the patient late on 15 June and sent to NCLE for testing. The positive result was confirmed and reported to WHO on June 16th using Real-Time PCR testing with materials specifically designed to detect the new A/H1N1 influenza, provided by USCDC.

As of 16 June 2009, there were 35,928 confirmed cases of new influenza A (H1N1) in 76 countries with 163 deaths. Amongst Lao PDR's neighbours, there are currently 201 confirmed cases in Thailand, 25 in Viet Nam, and 362 in China.

It is anticipated there will be further cases in Lao PDR in the coming weeks and months but like most other countries, that most cases will be clinically mild and not require special treatment. All members of the community who develop signs of influenza such as fever with a cough, sore throat, runny nose or body aches are advised to contact a health professional immediately (see contact details below). This will allow early diagnosis and appropriate treatment as necessary.

What should I do to protect myself and my family?

- See a doctor if you develop symptoms of influenza-like illness that include fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, headaches, chills and fatigue.
- Stay home from work or school to limit contact with others.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue or your sleeve when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in a rubbish bin after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.

Where to get more information

During public health emergencies, it is important to seek accurate information about the situation. For official information on this evolving situation and for technical and communication guidance for health administrators, health professionals and the general public, please click on the following links:

WHO: <http://www.who.int/csr/disease/swineflu/en/index.html>

US CDC: http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/?s_cid=swineFlu_outbreak_internal_001

France: http://www.invs.sante.fr/derniere_minute/default.asp

In Lao PDR:

For the public:

National Emerging Infectious Disease Coordination Office (NEIDCO)

Hotline Telephone: 166

UN Lao website: www.unlao.org

For technical queries:

National Centre for Laboratory and Epidemiology (NCLE)

Telephone: 021 350 209

World Health Organization - Lao PDR

Communications Officer Cathy Williams

Email*: commndiseaseinfo.lao@wpro.who.int

Telephone: 020 514-1105 Office: 021 353902-4 ext 81839

For general medical queries:

UN Dispensary Physician & Nurse

In the first instance please email:

Ivy Caballes ivy.caballes@undp.org

Ben.Burford ben.burford@undp.org

In the second instance please call: 021 267789 or 021 267788

For after hours medical emergencies for UN staff **only** please call: 020 559 9292

Embassy staff should contact their normal clinic.
