

29th May 2009, 9.00 am

**Human infections of influenza A (H1N1):**

**Perspective from WHO/Lao P.D.R. (update 17)**

**NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE**

**[www.unlao.org/H1N1/influenzah1n1.asp](http://www.unlao.org/H1N1/influenzah1n1.asp)**

**Highlights:**

- Globally, there are **14,772**, confirmed human cases of influenza A (H1N1) with 96 deaths
- WHO supported consultant helps to improve efficiency of national testing laboratories
- Internet technology improves global disease surveillance
- **There are no known suspected or confirmed human cases of influenza A (H1N1) in Lao PDR**

**Current level of influenza pandemic alert**

Influenza pandemic alert remains at phase 5. Sustained community level transmission has been documented only in North America.

WHO phases to undergo revision to reflect disease severity as well as geographic spread.

For further clarification about pandemic phases please read:

[http://www.who.int/csr/disease/avian\\_influenza/phase/en/index.html](http://www.who.int/csr/disease/avian_influenza/phase/en/index.html)

**Global situation**

As of 28 May 2009, 50 countries have officially reported 14,666 cases of influenza A(H1N1) infection, including 95 deaths.

Cases have been reported in Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, El Salvador, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, India, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kuwait, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russia, Spain, Singapore, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkey, UK, USA. Deaths have been reported as follows: 1 in Canada; 1 in Costa Rica; 83 in Mexico; and 11 in USA.

Four new countries have confirmed cases (Bahrain (1), Czech Republic (1), Romania (1), and Singapore (1)).

**Western Pacific and Local Region:**

There continue to be no deaths in Western Pacific and South East Asian regions. Japan has 364 cases, Australia 146, China 39, The Republic of South Korea 33, New Zealand 9 cases, Malaysia 2, and The Philippines 6. Numbers in Thailand are stable at 2 and Singapore has reported its first case.

There are no suspected or confirmed human cases of influenza A (H1N1) in Lao PDR.

**What is the WHO Lao PDR country office doing?**

WHO continues to provide technical assistance to the Governments response efforts. Ongoing support over the past week has included:

- A WHO-supported CDC consultant assisting the National Centre for Laboratory and Epidemiology (NCLE) to streamline testing procedures and prioritize sample testing in light of H1N1. She also provided advanced training in virus culture technique and haemagglutinin inhibition assays.
- Assisting NEIDCO to organize the final Provincial Pandemic Planning Workshop in the south of Lao PDR taking place from 1-5 June. The workshop will involve the development of tailored provincial plans for the five southern provinces and prioritization of activities to be implemented. Once the workshop is completed, all provinces in Lao PDR will have developed tailored provincial plans.

**Internet technology improves global disease surveillance.**

A new paper in the New England Journal of Medicine say the Internet is a major tool in modern public health surveillance, including H1N1. The authors of Digital Disease Detection — Harnessing the Web for Public Health Surveillance, in The New England Journal of Medicine (Volume 360:2153-2157 May 21, 2009 Number 21) say the internet has not only enabled public health officials, clinicians and the public to quickly access data but has also proved to be a highly effective tool for social health networking, improving knowledge sharing and problem solving.

### **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](http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/?s_cid=swineFlu_outbreak_internal_001)  
**France:** [http://www.invs.sante.fr/derniere\\_minute/default.asp](http://www.invs.sante.fr/derniere_minute/default.asp)

### **In Lao PDR:**

#### ***For the public:***

National Avian and Human Influenza Coordination Office (NAHICO)  
Hotline Telephone: 166  
UN Lao website: [www.unlao.org](http://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\*: [commdiseaseinfo.lao@wpro.who.int](mailto:commdiseaseinfo.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](mailto:ivy.caballes@undp.org)  
Ben.Burford [ben.burford@undp.org](mailto: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

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