

7 July 2009

Human infections of Pandemic H1N1 2009 virus:

Perspective from WHO Lao P.D.R. (update 25)

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

Two new cases of Pandemic H1N1 2009 confirmed over the weekend in Lao PDR, surveillance continues.

Epidemiologists with the National Center for Laboratory and Epidemiology (NCLE), in collaboration with WHO Lao PDR Country Office continued surveillance activities to detect cases of Pandemic H1N1 2009 in Laos. No contacts of the first three confirmed cases have developed the disease. Two youths from Lao PDR, visiting another country, were confirmed to have Pandemic H1N1 2009 while they were away. The children have since returned to Lao PDR. Close contacts of these children were recommended to stay at home and their health status was checked daily. One contact that developed symptoms was tested and found to be positive.

The latest case is a student returning to Laos via Wattay Airport on Friday from an affected country. A thermoscanner at the airport detected that the student had a fever. Laboratory results Saturday confirmed Pandemic H1N1 2009. This brings the total number of cases with Pandemic H1N1 confirmed in Laos to five. Note that WHO counts cases under the country where people are diagnosed, which may differ from media reporting.

As of 6 July 2009, there were 94,512 cases WHO-confirmed cases of Pandemic H1N1 2009 from more than 120 countries with 429 deaths. Amongst Lao PDR's neighbours, there are currently 7 confirmed cases in Cambodia, 2040 in China, 1 case in Myanmar, 2076 in Thailand and 181 in Viet Nam.

It is anticipated there will be further cases in Lao PDR in the coming weeks and months. In most other countries, the symptoms of Pandemic H1N1 2009 have, for the most part, been clinically mild and have not required special treatment. It is expected the situation will be similar in Lao PDR. People 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.
