

28 July 2009

Human infections of Pandemic H1N1 2009 virus:

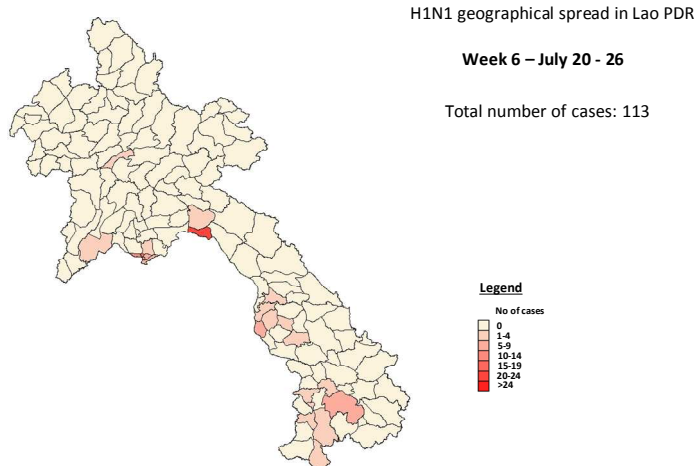
Perspective from WHO Lao P.D.R. (update 28)

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

Number of cases Pandemic H1N1 2009 in Lao PDR continues to climb

The number of WHO-confirmed cases of Pandemic H1N1 2009 rose to 113 over the past week and includes students from a vocational school in Vientiane Capital. The Government temporarily suspended one class of 40 students at the school after an ill student transmitted the virus to five others.

Laboratory testing conducted by the National Center for Laboratory and Epidemiology (NCLE) confirmed that of the 113 people diagnosed in Lao PDR, 52 are from Vientiane Capital. The regional distribution of cases is shown in the map below. Amongst the cases, one death has occurred due to H1N1, on July 17. No current cases are regarded as severe.



As of 27 July 2009, there were 133,861 WHO-confirmed cases of Pandemic H1N1 2009 from 157 countries with 797 deaths. However, the virus has become so widespread that countries are no longer required to test and report individual cases. The number of cases reported therefore understates the actual number. Amongst Lao PDR's neighbours, there are currently 13 confirmed cases in Cambodia; 4533 (1 death) in China; 4 cases in Myanmar; 6776 (44 deaths) in Thailand; and 475 in Viet Nam.

WHO is working closely with the National Emerging and Infectious Disease Control Office (NEIDCO) and the Ministry of Health to recommend actions that will help slow the spread of H1N1 in Lao PDR. Actions under consideration include school closure. Parents are urged to make have contingency plans in place for looking after their children should school be closed.

It is anticipated that the number of H1N1 cases in Lao PDR will increase in the near future to the point that testing and reporting of individual cases will no longer be useful. People should take the precautions noted below to help prevent the illness. For most of

the cases in Lao PDR to date, the symptoms of Pandemic H1N1 2009 have been clinically mild and have not required special treatment. It is expected that this situation will continue.

What should I do to protect myself and my family?

- If you are ill, 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 phone 166, or visit the UN Lao website: www.unlao.org

For technical queries:

Contact National Centre for Laboratory and Epidemiology (NCLE) at 021 350 209; or contact the World Health Organization—Lao PDR, Communications Officer Cathy Cochrane, email cochranec@wpro.who.int, phone 021 353902-4

For general medical queries from UN staff ONLY:

Contact the UN Dispensary, Ivy Caballes, email ivy.caballes@undp.org, phone 021 267 789; For after hours medical emergencies for UN staff **only** please call: 020 559 9292.

Please note that the UN Physician, Dr. Ben Buford, will be on leave until 24 August. Dr. Cecile Hermann will substitute. UN staff may contact her through the UN Dispensary.

Embassy staff should contact their normal clinic.
