

**Pandemic H1N1 2009 Virus**  
**19th November 2009. Update 36**  
**Perspective from WHO Lao PDR**

**Published on the first and third Thursdays of the month**

**Surveillance Reporting for H1N1 in Lao PDR changes**

At the end of August, the National Centre for Laboratory and Epidemiology (NCLE) ceased testing each suspect case of H1N1, except in severe cases, health care workers and in provinces that do not yet have cases. The objective of surveillance is now to monitor all influenza-like illness by using a system of monitoring that has been adopted in many countries world-wide (see the table below).

**Table:** Monitoring of influenza-like illness in Lao PDR [week 46]

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Current status</b>
1. Geographic spread*	None Local (1 Province), Regional (<50% provinces) Widespread (>=50%)	<b>Widespread</b>
2. Change in total number of cases reported*	Increasing Decreasing Unchanged	<b>Decreasing</b>
3. Proportion of population affected*	Low/moderate (normal population affected) High (a large proportion), Very high (very large proportion)	<b>Low/Moderate</b>
4. Degree of disruption of health care services <sup>§</sup>	Low (not above usual), Moderate (above usual but not max capacity) Severe (exceeding capacity)	<b>Moderate</b>

\* Indicator measured by using clinical data from Vientiane, Lao PDR.

§ Indicator measured by using NCLE data collected from select hospitals.

As the table shows, influenza-like illness in Lao PDR is widespread geographically. Only four Provinces are yet to confirm cases of Pandemic H1N1. Compared to last week, the number of respiratory diseases reported has decreased, and the proportion of the population affected by respiratory disease is moderate. The degree of disruption to health services is also moderate. Data collected at the National Centre for Epidemiology and Laboratory (NCLE) shows that, since mid-July, the total numbers of reported respiratory disease cases have been higher than last year.

**Regional Update (countries bordering Lao PDR)**

The H1N1 virus is widespread throughout the region. For information about Pandemic H1N1 2009 worldwide, please visit the WHO International website: [www.who.int](http://www.who.int)

**Vaccines coming to Lao PDR**

Vaccines and antivirals are key tools in our ability to fight this pandemic. WHO has successfully sought nearly 200 million doses of pandemic vaccine in donations and these vaccines will be distributed to some 100 developing countries with no access to pandemic vaccine. Lao PDR is among the countries that will be receiving donated vaccine and plans are already underway for deployment. Further information will be shared regarding priority groups for vaccination when the vaccine arrival date is confirmed.

## **Ongoing issues**

It is still important to wash your hands frequently to help protect yourself and others from infection. To protect the health of others further and also to help ensure a quick recovery if you become ill, please stay home until you are well recovered. Covering your coughs and sneezes will also help to protect others from the virus.

The Information, Education and Communication (IEC) Task Force and the National Emerging and Infectious Disease Coordinating Office (NEIDCO) are working hard to convey how important it is that each person takes responsibility for helping to prevent the spread of the Pandemic H1N1 virus and with WHO support are currently running radio and TV information programmes.

## **Know when it's time to see a doctor**

If you have flu-like symptoms, which may include a fever, cough, sore throat, headache and body aches, you should suspect H1N1. There is no need for testing, but if any of the following symptoms occur, seek medical care right away:

- Difficulty breathing
- Fever lasting more than 3 days
- Condition improves and then gets worse

In addition, those who are at high risk for severe illness from Pandemic H1N1 should see a doctor if they develop any symptoms of the flu. Those at higher risk include persons with the following conditions:

- Cardiac disease, diabetes mellitus, chronic metabolic diseases, chronic renal diseases, chronic neurological conditions
- Haemoglobinopathies (genetically inherited disorders of red blood cell haemoglobin including sickle cell disease and the thalassaemias.)
- Immunosuppression (including from cancers, HIV/AIDS infection, drugs)

The following people are also at risk:

- Pregnant women, particularly in second and third trimesters.
- Persons with morbid obesity.

## **Where to get more information**

UN Lao website: [www.unlao.org](http://www.unlao.org)

WHO International: <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)

### ***For technical queries:***

Contact the World Health Organization, Lao PDR, email [commdiseaseinfo.lao@wpro.who.int](mailto:commdiseaseinfo.lao@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](mailto:ivy.caballes@undp.org), office phone 021 267 789. ***Embassy staff should contact their normal clinic.***

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