Situation update
Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)
and policy recommendations

18-19 FEBRUARY 2020

THIRTY-FIRST INTER-SESSIONAL
MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF
HEADS OF GOVERNMENT OF THE
CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY

Presented By: Dr Joy St. John
Executive Director
CARPHA
Outline

• Where are we now?
  • Current situation
  • Travel bans/advisories
  • Cruise ship situation

• What have we done?
  • Coordination
  • CARPHA’s response

• Policy recommendations
Where are we now?
Introduction

- Outbreak of COVID-19 causing severe acute respiratory illness reported in Wuhan, China since December 31, 2019
- CMOs alerted by CARPHA on January 4th
- WHO declared a PHEIC on January 30th
- The projected spread of COVID-19 is to be everywhere by April 2020.
What we currently know

Transmission and source

The outbreak in Wuhan, China was initially linked to Wuhan South China Seafood City and a zoonotic origin is likely

- WHO has confirmed that based on reports, person-to-person transmission is taking place within communities.

Treatment and vaccines

There is no known treatment but trials of drug cocktails are ongoing—remdesivir, ritonavir (with or without lopinavir) and chloroquine. Supportive therapy is the mainstay.

- There is no vaccine, and the development of a safe trial is at best months away.
Cruise Ships Denied Entry to Ports

• More than 300 people have tested positive for COVID-19 among passengers on a cruise ship docked off the coast of Japan.

Cruise ship refused port over virus fears to dock in Cambodia - operator

MS Westerdam has been turned away by five countries over coronavirus fears, though it says it has no sick passengers

Cambodia has agreed to let a cruise ship that has been turned away by five countries over fears that someone aboard may have the coronavirus to dock and disembark its passengers, the ship’s operator has said.

The MS Westerdam, which has 1,455 passengers and 802 crew on board, will dock at the Cambodian sea port of Sihanoukville on Thursday, Holland America Line said.

The ship - which says it has no sick passengers - has been turned away from Thailand, Japan, Taiwan, Guam and the Philippines, prompting fears prior to
What have we done?
• Coordination

Objectives of the Caribbean response are not only to prevent importation of a case, but to bring order and coherence to the responses of the Health and non-Health sectors as this outbreak evolves.
Security Cluster of CARICOM

• In November 2019 meeting chaired by IMPACS, Epidemics were upgraded to Tier 3 of the four tier risks and threats table of the CCSS RISK AND THREAT ASSESSMENT

• On 25th January 2020 JRCC started tracking persons coming from China to the Caribbean

• In February RSS has assisted with transporting specimens for urgent testing

• On 11th February CARPHA presented to the Meeting of Chiefs of Immigration and Customs chaired by IMPACS
CDEMA

- Held coordination meeting with CDEMA - January 2020
- Convened Sensitization meeting with National Disaster Coordinators - January 2020
- Shared CARPHA risk assessment for CDEMA planning
- Shared Situation reports and Technical Guidance
- CDEMA attended the RCM-HS
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Strengthening CMS treatment capacity

• Questionnaire to identify strengths and gaps

• Convening Expert Panel to devise sustainable Caribbean management of illness

• Convening the RCM-HS with IDPs to match gaps with IDP support
Comms products from CARPHA

- When communicating in the Initial Phase, it is important to present information that is simple, credible, accurate, consistent, and timely
Comms Products from CMS