Outbreak of Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)

CARPHA Situation Report – No. 12 February 17, 2020

Summary

On 11 February 2020 the WHO confirmed that the disease formerly referred to as the 2019 novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) has officially been named coronavirus disease (COVID-19).

This is an update to the Situation Report in relation to the outbreak of COVID-19, published on February 14, 2020.

An outbreak of novel coronavirus causing severe acute respiratory illness has been reported in Wuhan, China since December 21, 2019. There is evidence of human-to-human transmission among cases mostly in Wuhan city, but also in Japan, Vietnam, Germany and the United States of America.

CARPHA is working closely with international health partners to respond to this public health threat and provide timely advice and assistance to Member States and other regional partners and stakeholders.

On January 30, 2020 the World Health Organization (WHO) announced that this outbreak is a Public Health Emergency of International Concern. To date there have been no reported cases in the Region, thus the risk of importation of COVID-19 to the Region continues to be deemed LOW. However, CARPHA will continue to work with regional health security partners to review this risk level considering the rapidly changing global situation.

Relevant intelligence

China has begun to report clinically diagnosed cases without laboratory confirmation from Hubei Province. The WHO has included the number of clinically diagnosed cases in the Hubei Province in the total number of cases reported. CARPHA will use the statistics reported by the WHO, supplemented by other sources, where information is not available.

As of February 17, there were 71329 cases of patients with COVID-19. Outside of China, twenty-four (24) countries have confirmed at least one case among travellers exposed in China and/or person-to-person contact. Of the deaths reported to date, four were from outside of Mainland China. See Table 1 for more details on cases, deaths and recoveries.
Table 1: Countries or Territories with reported cases of COVID-19, 17 February 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Country/Territory</th>
<th>Cases</th>
<th>Suspected cases</th>
<th>Deaths</th>
<th>Recovered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>China*</td>
<td>70635</td>
<td>1772</td>
<td>11204</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rest of Asia**</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>80</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oceania</td>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>France</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North America</td>
<td>United States of America***</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>In transit (Japan: Cruise Ship)</td>
<td>355</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>71329</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>1775</td>
<td>11317</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Cases: Mainland China (73548), Hong Kong (57), Macau (10) and Taiwan (20) Deaths: Mainland China (1771), Hong Kong (1)
** Cases: Singapore (75), Japan (59), Thailand (34), South Korea (30), Malaysia (22), Vietnam (16), United Arab Emirates (9), India (3), Philippines (3), Cambodia (1), Nepal (1), Sri Lanka (1). Deaths: Japan (1), Philippines (1).
*** Cases: California (8), Illinois (2), Arizona (1), Massachusetts (1), Texas (1), Washington (1) and Wisconsin (1).
Sources: WHO Accessed at 8:00am. 17 February 2020.
http://who.maps.arcgis.com/apps/opsdashboard/index.html#c88e37cfc43b4ed3ba977d77e4a0667
https://gisanddata.maps.arcgis.com/apps/opsdashboard/index.html#/bda7594740fd40299423467b48e9ecf6
Impact

CARPHA activated its Incident Management Team for Emergency Response to enable CARPHA to work effectively with regional and international health partners to respond to this public health threat and provide timely advice and assistance to Member States and stakeholders. The Region has not had any confirmed cases of COVID-19 to-date.

Governance

CARPHA’S Incident Management Team for emergency response (IMT-ER) is leading the health response in keeping with CARPHA’s mandate from the Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA). The IMT-ER produces Situation Reports three times weekly and the most recent IMT-ER Debrief that reviewed the Incident Action Plan was held on Thursday 6th February.

Operations

Surveillance and Technical Response

- Developed algorithms to assist CMS to triage and manage suspected cases in their borders and in clinical settings.
- Circulated guidance to CMS and various stakeholders on the identification, isolation and response to suspected cases arriving via sea or air and for Ports of entry in CMS. The relevant guidelines are available on CARPHA’s website. http://carpha.org/What-We-Do/Public-Health/Novel-Coronavirus
- Activated the APIS Security Cluster tracking of passengers from China through IMPACS.
- Activated the Regional Coordinating Mechanism for Health Security in collaboration with the Caribbean Disaster and Emergency Response Agency and working closely with other stakeholders including OECS and CARICOM, PAHO, and IMPACs for a coordinated regional response.

Table 2: Summary of results of laboratory tests for SARS-CoV-2 conducted at CMML to date.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No of countries</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No of patients</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No SARS-CoV-2 positive</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternate diagnosis</td>
<td>Influenza A (H1N1) pdm09 and Influenza B</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Laboratory

- CARPHA Medical Microbiology Laboratory (CMML) has procured the appropriate primers and reagents and molecular diagnostic tests and are able to conduct specific detection of the new coronavirus for COVID-19. CMML has discussed with Laboratory Directors of 12 CARPHA member states the current situation and plans of action to face the COVID-19 emergency.
- During Epi weeks 7-8, CMML has tested a total of 11 patients (25 samples) from 6 member states. All results were negative for the presence of SARS-CoV-2, the causative agent of COVID-19. Two samples were positive for Influenza A (H1N1) pdm09 and Influenza B, respectively.
Expert Advice

• CARPHA has set up an expert Technical Advisory Group to provide guidance on the management of cases, should transmission occur in the region. The Panel is set to convene next week.

Communication and Information

• CARPHA’s Executive Director participated in a joint virtual media briefing with PAHO and CDEMA, hosted by the Caribbean Broadcasting Union for its print, television and radio members.
• On 10th February, CARPHA distributed a media release titled ‘CARPHA Medical Microbiology Laboratory is Ready to Respond to 2019-nCoV’.
• CARPHA Communications Unit has produced a Social Media Plan of Action for COVID-19 to support Regional Communications Strategy and combat misinformation spread to the public. The Communications Team is working closely with the Regional Health Communications Network (RHCN) and other stakeholders to provide timely updates and information. They have also developed various videos and infographics to counteract myths about the disease circulating in the Region. The latest media release and other relevant guidelines are available on CARPHA’s website http://carpha.org/What-We-Do/Public-Health/Novel-Coronavirus

Logistics and Planning

• Samples from Member States and reagents are being processed through the Trinidad and Tobago Customs Department without delay.
• Several Member States have implemented various measures to limit importation of the disease, including screening at ports of entry. Details can be obtained from the Ministries of Health in CMS.

Stakeholder Engagement

CARPHA is working closely with various stakeholders for a coordinated regional response, including the following:

• Convened the Regional Coordinating Mechanism for Health Security, consisting of Member States, regional and international agencies (including CDEMA, CARICOM, OECS, PAHO, CDC, PHE, PHAC, RIVM, ARS), with agreement on joint harmonized regional response.
• Ongoing communications with CARICOM on regional health response to COVID-19
• Convened a webinar for Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA) and Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO) and Ministers of Tourism on “Mitigating the impact of Coronavirus” with over 120 participants.
• Ongoing communications with Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) with regards to the Caribbean response to 2019-nCoV situation on cruise ships.
• Held nine COVID-19 response coordination meetings with Chief Medical Officers and CARICOM.
• Convened a joint briefing of National Disaster Coordinators in association with CARPHA.
• Held coordination meeting with Dr. Jean Marie PWR Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean and the World Bank on support to the preparation activities of Grenada, St Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Dominica.
• Met with PAHO focal point for clinical management.
• Delivered health education lecture on COVID-19 to Medical Officers of Health and Public Health Inspectors from all municipal corporations in Trinidad, at a meeting organised by Port of Spain Municipal Cooperation and the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development.

Way forward

CARPHA has identified that with the rapid spread of the virus from China to 24 other countries, CMS need to be in a state of readiness for any imported cases and subsequent local transmission. CARPHA is working with Technical experts across the region to provide up-to-date guidance and technical advice to CMS.

CARPHA would like to draw attention to various guidance documents, including several protocols for early investigations available from WHO website https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/situation-reports/20200216-sitrep-27-covid-19.pdf?sfvrsn=78c0eb78_2

CARPHA recommends that CMS continue to be vigilant, step up surveillance at their ports of entry and to ensure the relevant measures are in place to manage any imported cases that may arrive on their shores.

CARPHA stands ready to provide support and guidance to Member States as to how to strengthen their health systems response if person-to-person transmission becomes established in the Caribbean.

Key CARPHA documents that can be accessed from our website using the embedded links:

Technical Documents
- Traveller’s Guidelines
- Algorithm for Management of a suspected case
- Guidelines for Ports of Entry
- Guidelines for Conveyances
- Algorithm for contact tracing on conveyances

Media Releases:
- The Risk of 2019-nCoV Remains Low for the Caribbean but CARPHA Encourages Vigilance at Ports of Entry
- 2019-nCoV: CARPHA urges the Region to be Vigilant, Be Prepared
- Risk of Novel Coronavirus in the Caribbean “Low” says CARPHA, but Preparation Needed
- CARPHA Medical Microbiology Laboratory is Ready to Respond to 2019-nCoV

Communications Material
- Is there a new bleach cocktail that can cure and protect against the Flu and the Novel Coronavirus?
- How is the Novel Coronavirus new? Lysol and Clorox have “Human Coronavirus” listed on their labels
- Can a surgical mask protect me from coronavirus? CARPHA Biorisk Manager explains
Who should wear a mask for protection against coronavirus? CARPHA Biorisk Manager responds

Card 1: Cover your nose and mouth
Card 2: Cough or sneeze into elbow

References