Jordan

On 1 June 2014, the National IHR Focal Point for Jordan reported to WHO an additional case of Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus (MERS-CoV) in Amman, Jordan.

The case is 26-year-old male health-care worker. He presented with fever on 23 May 2014. His condition deteriorated as he developed pneumonia and gastrointestinal symptoms and he was admitted to the hospital on 30 May 2014. A specimen was collected and tested positive for MERS-CoV on 31 May 2014. He is currently in a stable condition. He has no known comorbidities, but does have a history of contact with a laboratory confirmed MERS-CoV health-care worker case reported to WHO on 11 May 2014. He has no history of travel and no history of contact with animals.

Tracing and screening of six family members and 54 health-care workers for MERS-CoV is currently ongoing.

Globally, 681 laboratory-confirmed cases of infection with MERS-CoV including 204 related deaths have officially been reported to WHO. This global total includes all of the cases reported in this update, plus 44 laboratory confirmed cases officially reported to WHO by Saudi Arabia between 19 May and 2 June. WHO is working closely with Saudi Arabia for additional information on these cases and will provide further updates as soon as possible.

WHO advice

Based on the current situation and available information, WHO encourages all Member States to continue their surveillance for severe acute respiratory infections (SARI) and to carefully review any unusual patterns.

Infection prevention and control measures are critical to prevent the possible spread of MERS-CoV in health care facilities. Health-care facilities that provide for patients suspected or confirmed to be infected with MERS-CoV infection should take appropriate measures to decrease the risk of transmission of the virus from an infected patient to other patients, health-care workers and visitors. Health-care workers should be educated, trained and refreshed with skills on infection prevention and control.

It is not always possible to identify patients with MERS-CoV early because some have mild or unusual symptoms. For this reason, it is important that health-care workers apply standard precautions consistently with all patients – regardless of their diagnosis – in all work practices all the time.

Droplet precautions should be added to the standard precautions when providing care to all patients with symptoms of acute respiratory infection. Contact precautions and eye protection

should be added when caring for probable or confirmed cases of MERS-CoV infection. Airborne precautions should be applied when performing aerosol generating procedures.

Patients should be managed as potentially infected when the clinical and epidemiological clues strongly suggest MERS-CoV, even if an initial test on a nasopharyngeal swab is negative. Repeat testing should be done when the initial testing is negative, preferably on specimens from the lower respiratory tract.

Health-care providers are advised to maintain vigilance. Recent travellers returning from the Middle East who develop SARI should be tested for MERS-CoV as advised in the current surveillance recommendations. All Member States are reminded to promptly assess and notify WHO of any new case of infection with MERS-CoV, along with information about potential exposures that may have resulted in infection and a description of the clinical course. Investigation into the source of exposure should promptly be initiated to identify the mode of exposure, so that further transmission of the virus can be prevented.

People at high risk of severe disease due to MERS-CoV should avoid close contact with animals when visiting farms or barn areas where the virus is known to be potentially circulating. For the general public, when visiting a farm or a barn, general hygiene measures, such as regular hand washing before and after touching animals, avoiding contact with sick animals, and following food hygiene practices, should be adhered to.

WHO does not advise special screening at points of entry with regard to this event nor does it currently recommend the application of any travel or trade restrictions.