



2 New Positive Cases

Monday 20th July 2020

The National Control Centre now announces a further two cases in Port Moresby.

Case #18 and Case #19 add to the number of Health care workers confirmed with COVID-19.

Case #18, is a 53 year old male with no history of travel. He was experiencing fever, cough, shortness of breath and was tested via GeneXpert. Case 18 has known respiratory illness and is currently experiencing respiratory distress being monitored by our team.

Case #19 is a 39 year old male who works as a medical officer. He experienced fever and presented for testing. He was also confirmed via GeneXpert.

Dr PaisonDakulala Deputy Controller at the National Control Centre commented, "Our targeted testing strategy has given us more efficient use of our resources. Rather than casting a wide net with testing, we are focused on testing symptomatic patients and pre-triaging is the key.

Thinking holistically, my concern is the most recent cases over the past 5 days have been health care workers. Health care workers have a culture of seeking medical attention when they are experiencing illness.

I cannot say that the large percentage of our population have the same habits. We have symptomatic people in our communities who are not staying home, but being socially active. Going to work, going to schools, moving around and possibly infecting others. We need these people to present for testing".

The National Control Centre has been challenged to upscale testing throughout the country while taking stock of quantities of Universal Transport Medium's available locally and throughout the world. The levels of PPE are at an

acceptable level and staff are undergoing refresher courses around Infection Protection Control.

A concerned Controller David Manning stated, "These statistics are truly alarming. I think the argument that we are immune from COVID-19 or blessed with protection against the virus can easily be dispelled with what our statistics have shown us over the last 5 days. In the last 5 days we have initiated 200 tests and of those tests specifically, we have identified 7 positive cases. These are alarming rates even against world standards. This brings the number of active cases being isolated by the NCD PHA team to 7. The capacity at Rita Flynn Emergency Ward for isolation is 70, at the current rate of infection per day and using exponential modeling, this has the potential to be reached by the end of the month".

All PHA's around the country are strongly urged to take ownership of their territory at ground level. To ensure clinics are testing and keeping our communities safe from this invisible enemy.

The NiupelaPasin was recently launched by Prime Minister Hon. James Marape and will be disseminated widely through Churches, Business Houses, Schools and Community groups in coming days.



Dr Paison Dakulala
Deputy Controller



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