

Novel coronavirus 2019-nCoV

Papua New Guinea Situation Report 3



31 January 2020

This Situation Report is issued twice a week (Tuesday and Friday) by the National Emergency Operations Center (NEOC) for the Novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV). The Report is not comprehensive and covers information that we have as of reporting date.

HIGHLIGHTS

- ❑ WHO declared the outbreak of novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) in China, with exportations to other countries, a **public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC)** on 30 January 2020. The declaration was made based on the advice of the Emergency Committee under the International Health Regulations (IHR, 2005).
- ❑ The declaration means that **all countries should be prepared for a response in case of importation of the disease**. This will involve putting in place measures for containment, including active surveillance, early detection, isolation and case management, contact tracing and prevention of onward spread of 2019-nCoV infection.
- ❑ The Committee **does not recommend any travel or trade restriction** based on the current information.
- ❑ As of 30 **January 2020**, there are 82 confirmed cases reported **outside of China in 18 countries**. Of these, only 7 had no history of travel in China. No deaths have been reported outside China. **It is likely that more countries will be reporting cases**.
- ❑ As of 31 January, Papua New Guinea has **no case of novel coronavirus 2019-nCoV** but we are on heightened alert to detect any possible entry into the country.
- ❑ PNG shares with the global community as being **high risk** of importing the disease.
- ❑ The Government of Papua New Guinea (PNG) through the National Department of Health (NDOH), with support from the World Health Organization (WHO), is ramping up preparedness and response measures. A **preparedness and response plan** is under review to include scenarios for scaled up response.
- ❑ **Preparedness measures** have started to be implemented, including screening of passengers at Jacksons International Airport, surveillance and contract tracing, preparation for the transport and isolation of suspected cases, training of clinicians and laboratory testing.
- ❑ Coronavirus **hotline +675 71960813** is operational 24/7 starting 24 January 2020. First media conference was held on 30 January 2020.

GLOBAL SITUATION IN NUMBERS

(The numbers are based on WHO sitrep as of 30 January 2020. The figures change very quickly.)

Globally: 7,818 confirmed

China: 7,736 confirmed
12,167 suspected
1,370 severe
170 deaths

Outside China: 82 confirmed
Countries with cases: 18 countries
(Australia, Cambodia, Canada, Finland, France, Germany, India, Japan, Malaysia, Nepal, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, United Arab Emirates, USA, Viet Nam)

Papua New Guinea has no reported case as of 31 January 2020

RISK ASSESSMENT

China: very high
Region: high
Global level: high

PUBLIC HEALTH PREPAREDNESS MEASURES

The National Department of Health has activated its preparedness and response mechanisms and have put in place the following measures:

Coordination and Leadership

- The National Emergency Operations Center is activated starting 27 January 2020 and meets daily at 8:30 am and debriefing at 4:30 pm. The incident management system is being drafted to identify key people for the key functions.
- A preparedness and response plan is drafted and being updated based on the new information/events.
- The NDOH has allocated resources for the response activities.
- The Prime Minister has been briefed on the preparedness measures on 29 January 2020.
- A site visit was made by Acting Secretary, WHO Representative to the airport, St John Ambulance and POMGEN to confirm processes are in place for the response.

**National Emergency
Operations Center
for coronavirus 2019-nCoV**

**Daily Operations Meeting
8:30 AM**

Debriefing (ad-hoc)
4:30 PM

3rd Floor, NDOH Building
AOPI Center, Port Moresby



Surveillance

- Coronavirus hotline **+675 71960813** is operational 24/7 starting 24 January 2020. This serves as a mechanism to report any person who has met case definition. Reports are investigated by the surveillance team.
- There is a roster of operators responsible for the hotline and talking points and standard responses have been developed. Approximately 20 calls per day are received with questions on personal protection.
- Monitoring and collecting of health declaration forms of arriving passengers at the Jacksons International Airport starting 27 January 2020
- Both event-based and syndromic surveillance systems are monitored by the NDOH and Provincial Health Authorities. NDOH routine surveillance for influenza like illnesses (ILI) at sentinel sites is also ongoing. For any suspected ILI cases, nasopharyngeal swab is collected for laboratory diagnosis.
- A team of trained surveillance officers are mobilized to conduct case investigation and contact tracing.

Measures at the Points of Entry

- ❑ The Jacksons International Airport is the priority point of entry under monitoring. Some of the measures in place are starting 28 January 2020.
 - Providing advisory to all arriving passengers through the airline announcement.
 - Screening and filling up of health declaration forms of all arriving passengers.
 - Screening of passengers and requiring medical clearance before they board the aircraft in Hong Kong, Singapore and Manila.
 - A Health Desk is operational at the Jacksons International Airport. Health staff are positioned as soon as passengers disembark (before Customs) and they also check travellers with history of travel to Wuhan, China.
 - Protocol for isolation and quarantine of patients is being drafted and will be tested.
 - Advisory to airlines operators for measures in case a passenger gets sick on board an aircraft.
 - There is now a roster of NDOH staff in place. About 6 -7 officers currently on rotational arrangement, screening 7-8 international flights with over 600 passengers per day using the screening and action algorithm for decision and action.
 - To date, around 10 passengers have been referred to rapid response team for action and home follow ups.
 - Health declaration forms have been revised to collect better information for surveillance and follow up purposes.

- ❑ Advice was provided to international shipping vessels that they must receive clearance from the Health Quarantine officers before docking at ports.
- ❑ On 29 January, the Foreign Affairs and International Trade has established a health desk for people affected by the outbreak. The email address is helpdesk.dfait@gmail.com and the phone numbers are: 3014131 and 3014115.



Clinical Management

- ❑ An isolation area (8 beds now that can be expanded to accommodate more) at Port Moresby General Hospital) is being prepared as the designated ward for any suspected case. Anyone suspected of the novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) will be isolated as soon as detected at Jacksons International Airport.
- ❑ St John's Ambulance is contracted and on standby to transport any sick passenger to the designated area.
- ❑ Medical response plan is drafted to assist point of entry surveillance, clinical assessment and care of sick patients.
- ❑ Pathway for patient movement from the airport and area for safe patient assessment and care is in place.



Infection Prevention and Control

- An advisory will be provided to all health care facilities on the management of persons that meet the case definition.
- An orientation/training to the health care workers on infection prevention and control will be planned this week.
- PPE supplies have been provided and additional supplies are under procurement.

Laboratory Testing

- The PNG Institute of Medical Research (PNG IMR) virology laboratory is designated to test for novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV). It is the designated laboratory for influenza.
- Viral RNA extraction test kits already provided to IMR.
- Three samples have been collected from persons under investigation for pan-coronavirus testing.

Risk Communication

- Media conference was held on 30 January 2020, by NDOH Secretary and WHO Representative.
- Advisory on the prevention measures have been disseminated to the public through the media and social media platforms.
- Measures are ongoing to counter rumors, speculations, public anxiety, misinformation and proliferation of fake news – some influenced by social media reports from other countries and others due to “perceived” slow response in the country.
- Discussion with mobile companies will be made for text blasting of messages.

ADVISORY TO THE PUBLIC

During previous outbreaks due to other coronavirus (Middle-East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS)), human to human transmission occurred through droplets, contact and fomites, suggesting that the transmission mode of the 2019-nCoV can be similar.

The basic principles to reduce the general risk of transmission of acute respiratory infections include the following:

- Avoiding close contact with people suffering from acute respiratory infections.
- Frequent hand-washing, especially after direct contact with ill people or their environment.
- Avoiding unprotected contact with farm or wild animals.

Lukautim yu na femli long sik coronavirus:

-  Wasim han wantaim sop na wara
-  Karamapim nus na maus bilong yu taim yu laik kus
-  Stap longwe na noken go klostu long ol lain husat i gat kus na fiva
-  Kukim gut olgeta abus bifo yu laik kaikai
-  Noken holim natin ol enimol we oli save stap lo bus

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- ❑ People with symptoms of acute respiratory infection should practice cough etiquette (maintain distance, cover coughs and sneezes with disposable tissues or clothing, and wash hands).
- ❑ Within healthcare facilities, enhance standard infection prevention and control practices in hospitals, especially in emergency departments.
- ❑ When visiting live markets in areas currently experiencing cases of novel coronavirus, avoid direct unprotected contact with live animals and surfaces in contact with animals;
- ❑ The consumption of raw or undercooked animal products should be avoided. Raw meat, milk or animal organs should be handled with care, to avoid cross-contamination with uncooked foods, as per good food safety practices.

For any updated information and updates, check out the links below:

NDOH Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/PNGNDOH/>

WHO Papua New Guinea Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/WHOPapuaNewGuinea/>

WHO Website: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/>

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