

Novel coronavirus 2019-nCoV

Papua New Guinea Situation Report 4



4 February 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

- ❑ As of **3 February 2020**, there are **23 countries** affected by novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV). It is likely that more countries will be reporting cases.
- ❑ As of 03 February 2020, Papua New Guinea has **no case of novel coronavirus 2019-nCoV**.
- ❑ The Government of Papua New Guinea (PNG) through the National Department of Health (NDOH), with support from the World Health Organization (WHO), has developed a Preparedness and Response Plan for Novel Coronavirus. The plan has a budget that will be submitted to National Executive Council (NEC).
- ❑ **Preparedness measures** have been implemented since 27 January, especially mandatory health screening at the Jacksons International Airport and other points of entry; preparation of the isolation unit at Port Moresby General Hospital, activation of the rapid response team for investigation.
- ❑ Coronavirus **hotline +675 71960813** is operational 24/7 starting 24 January 2020. The hotline receives an average of 20 calls a day, mostly asking for information and self-reporting of sick people.
- ❑ First media conference was held on 30 January 2020. A media orientation was held on 3 February 2020.
- ❑ The Minister for Health and HIV/AIDs signed the Gazettal notices on 3 February related to appointing an isolation ward; adding novel coronavirus, MERS, and SARS as quarantinable diseases; declaring an epidemic caused by a quarantinable disease; and directing authorities at all points of entry into PNG to accomplish health declaration forms for all incoming travellers.

GLOBAL SITUATION IN NUMBERS

(The numbers are based on WHO sitrep as of 3 February 2020. The figures change very quickly.)

Globally: 17,391 confirmed (2838 new)

**China: 17,238 confirmed (2,831 new)
2,296 severe (186 new)
361 deaths (57 new)**

Outside China:

**153 confirmed (7 new)
1 death (Philippines)
23 countries**

(Australia, Cambodia, Canada, Finland, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Nepal, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Singapore, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Thailand, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, USA, Viet Nam)

Papua New Guinea has no reported case as of 3 February 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:

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

**Daily Operations Meeting
8:30 AM**

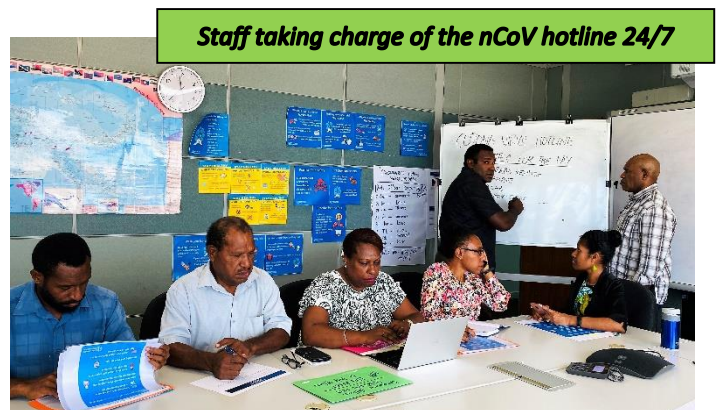
3rd Floor, NDOH Building
AOPI Center, Port Moresby

Coordination and Leadership

- ❑ The National Emergency Operations Center (NEOC) continues to meet daily since its activation on 27 January 2020. The incident management is in place with people identified to lead each cluster.
- ❑ A preparedness and response plan is drafted, with budget developed.
- ❑ Color-coded scenarios and appropriate scale of response had been developed for PNG as basis for the preparedness and response planning.
- ❑ Following the site visit on 31 January by Acting Secretary, WHO Representative to the airport, St John Ambulance and Port Moresby General Hospital (PMGH), key ministers from various agencies conducted their own site visits on 3 February to confirm that processes are in place.
- ❑ The Minister for Health and HIV/ AIDs signed the following Gazettal notices on 3 February:
 - Appointing an isolation ward at Port Moresby General Hospital under the Quarantine Act 1953 for a period of 60 days.
 - Declared novel coronavirus, MERS, and SARS a quarantinable disease under the Quarantine Act 1953 and an infectious disease under the Public Health Act 1973.
 - Declared that an epidemic caused by a quarantinable disease or danger of such an epidemic exists in PNG. This allows the Minister for Health and HIV/ AIDs to take actions as necessary to control and eradicate the epidemic.
 - Directed authorities at all points of entry into PNG to distribute a form to all incoming travellers and collect said forms.

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.
- ❑ The hotline receives approximately 20 calls per day. Most calls are from those seeking information, but some persons under investigation were reported through the hotline.
- ❑ Collection and analysis of health declaration forms of arriving passengers at the Jacksons International Airport ongoing.
- ❑ 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 (rapid response team) 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.
 - Requiring all inbound passengers to fill out mandatory health declaration forms.
 - 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 China.
 - Protocol for isolation and quarantine of patients is developed.
 - Advisory to airlines operators for measures in case a passenger gets sick on board an aircraft.
 - Roster of 6-7 NDOH staff currently on rotational arrangement to screen international flights. Over 600 passengers per day are screened and declaration forms are processed by the surveillance team using an algorithm for decision and action.
 - To date, around 10 passengers have been referred to rapid response team for action and home follow ups.
- ❑ On 3 February, Ministry of Immigration and Border Security issued a public notice regarding entry to Papua New Guinea for those with travel history to China.
- ❑ 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 PMGH 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.
- ❑ 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.
- ❑ 13 PMGH staff have been trained on PPEs: 3 clinicians, 4 radiology staff; and 6 support services staff. Nursing staff are scheduled to be trained on 5 February.
- ❑ PPE supplies have been provided, however, the supply is not sufficient. Procurement is underway but it will take time to arrive in the country.



Training of PMGH on use of PPE

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. A follow up orientation was held on 3 February with media organizations to clarify some of the terminologies used in reporting and get support in allaying people's fears.
- ☐ A regular media conference is now being set every Thursday to provide update to the media.
- ☐ Advisory on the prevention measures have been disseminated to the public through the media and social media platforms.
- ☐ To cater to the requests of schools for information materials, UNICEF will link with Ministry of Education and will be asked to support in adapting WHO infographics and messages for children and schools.
- ☐ Discussion with mobile companies is still being explored 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.
- ☐ 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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