

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MANAGING INFLUENZA A (H1N1-2009)

Influenza A (H1N1-2009) has become endemic among global communities. Yesterday, the World Health Organisation (WHO) informed that countries are no longer required to submit regular reports of individual laboratory-confirmed cases and deaths to WHO. This is because the reporting of such numbers is no longer a useful monitoring tool. WHO has also decided that it will no longer publish the global tables showing the number of confirmed cases for all countries.

2 With this decision by the WHO, MOH will not be able to compile an accurate list of Influenza A (H1N1-2009) affected countries. We will accordingly remove the list from the MOH website.

Tracking Progress of Influenza A (H1N1-2009) Outbreak

3 Instead, in Singapore, we will track the progress of the Influenza A (H1N1-2009) outbreak in two ways:

i) First, we will continue our influenza biosurveillance and report its finding regularly. We have a good surveillance system in place which carries out routine laboratory tests on random virus samples taken from patients in our clinics and hospitals to determine the circulating influenza strains. Latest data shows that 13% of patients with flu-like symptoms are due to Influenza A (H1N1-2009).

ii) Second, we will report the number of confirmed cases who are still in hospital. Though Influenza A (H1N1-2009) is mild in most cases, it can pose complications or even death to certain high-risk patients, especially if they do not seek prompt treatment. While the vast majority of the patients will recover at home, a small minority of at-risk patients will have to be hospitalised or even admitted to ICUs.

4 Our hospitals have already ramped up resources to focus on at-risk patients. Patients with mild symptoms have been able to go home to recuperate with Medical

Certificates (MC), and advisories on how they can take care of themselves and their families. Based on the current mild clinical picture of Influenza A (H1N1-2009), contact tracing and HQOs are also generally not required. They can however be initiated under specific situations, based on risk stratification and assessment by public health specialists.

5 By focusing on high-risk patients needing hospitalization, we can provide these patients with the best chance of a full recovery.

6 As at 7 Jul, there were 85 confirmed Influenza A (H1N1-2009) cases in hospitals, including 1 in ICU.

Public Hospital	Hospitalised (in ICU*)
Alexandra Hospital	10
Changi General Hospital	23
KK Women's and Children's Hospital	27
National University Hospital	5
Singapore General Hospital	7
Tan Tock Seng Hospital	2 (1*)
CDC	11
Total	85 (1*)

*number of patient(s) in Intensive Care Unit

7 MOH will update the table on its website regularly.

MINISTRY OF HEALTH

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