



Epidemiology Unit

Ministry of Healthcare and Nutrition

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Medical Officer Incharge,
Airport Health Office

Re: Guidelines on Swine fever outbreak in North America and guidelines to be adopted at entry points to Sri Lanka

As you may already be aware, there is an outbreak of Swine influenza or swine flu caused by a novel A/ H1N1 virus spreading across North America affecting multiple locations in Mexico and USA. Epidemiological investigations suggest that the spread is consistent with human to human transmission. Since this is a situation of **Public Health Emergency of Important Concern (PHEIC)**, WHO has already alerted the Sri Lankan authorities including the Epidemiology Unit and the IHR focal point to assess the country situation and ensure preparedness for prompt response at all levels. In this regard, entry points to the country are deemed important since being vigilant and strengthening proper surveillance at these points are pivotal for prevention and control. Therefore, following guidelines will be issued to the airport health office to implement until further notice is issued. These guidelines may be amenable to change from time to time.

Guidelines to be followed at the air port until the swine influenza is declared free globally.

Please ensure that the "Health Desk at the air port "operates round the clock (24/7). A medical officer/PHI presence is necessary to make decisions regarding passengers returning from Swine influenza affected countries.

Obtain the support of the flight desk to receive information regarding passengers arriving from Mexico, USA, New Zealand and Canada where the disease spreads at the moment.

With the help of the air port authorities, do take measures to announce to the passengers to report to the Health Desk for a declaration of health status if they have arrived from the affected areas.

A list of affected countries, as per the WHO list "will be provided to you. This will be updated from time to time.

Those passengers arriving from affected countries with manifested symptoms suggestive of Influenza like illness (ILI) need to be referred to the IDH for isolation and confirmation of the disease.

Suspected case ;

Individuals presenting with acute febrile respiratory illness (fever > 38C) with the spectrum of disease from ILI (cough, sore throat, shortness of breath) to pneumonia and one of the following :

- close contact to a suspected case of swine influenza A(H1N1) virus while the case was ill
- Recent travel to an area where there are confirmed cases of Swine influenza

Those passengers arriving from affected countries without manifested symptoms need to undergo voluntary quarantine. Therefore, please inform the Epidemiologist and the relevant MOH about the details of the patient by telephone or fax and in the annexed reporting form.

Please take measures to educate the airport staff on transmission based infection control measures. For this purpose, ensure with the air port authorities that face masks are in adequate quantities. Please note that disposable masks should be discarded after 4-6 hours.

Since it is possible to get surfaces contaminated with secretions of patients containing viruses, ensure that they be disinfected at regular intervals with 70% alcohol. Please see that a person to oversee disinfection procedures is identified, schedules for disinfection made, the staff on disinfection and proper disposal of used disinfectants are trained.

If you need any further information, please refer to the general guidelines issued by the Epidemiology Unit in this regard, or the general circular No 02-164/2005 on guidelines for the preparedness and response to an Avian Influenza pandemic threat or contact the Epidemiologist.

Your prompt action in this regard is very much appreciated.

Dr. Paba Palihawadana
Acting Chief Epidemiologist