



Epidemiology Unit
Ministry of Healthcare and Nutrition

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EPID/34/XB/2008

6th June 2012

Director/Medical Superintendent
All Teaching, General, Base and District Hospitals

Preparing for Possible Clusters of Seasonal Influenza Cases caused by Influenza A (H1N1pdm) 2009 virus

A few confirmed cases of Influenza A(H1N1pdm) 2009 had been reported through routine influenza surveillance and upon investigating a cluster of cases at National Institute of Mental Health. This virus strain presently acts as a seasonal influenza virus globally and causes a general seasonal influenza infection.

In the face of this development, response activities to face a possible surge of OPD patients and possible panic among public and health staff should be initiated in the country mainly targeting the sentinel hospitals identified under the avian/pandemic influenza preparedness project.

A summary guideline on case management has been prepared by the Epidemiology Unit and a copy is attached to this letter. This document differs from the existing detailed guidelines which were issued as a department General Circular (no: 01-37/2009 dated 17th November 2009) and the newer Summary Guidelines dated 27th December 2010 which catered to guide management of patients in the first and the second waves of H1N1 pandemic. This is because this infection caused by this virus strain now causes seasonal influenza disease.

The guideline document highlights salient points on policies for hospital admission, antiviral therapy, laboratory investigation and chemoprophylaxis for A(H1N1pdm) seasonal influenza patients. It also summarizes the infection control guidelines.

Please make sure that all your staff members are aware of this infection as seasonal influenza and take necessary steps to avoid undue panic or concern. Stocks of Oseltamivir and facilities to collect and send laboratory samples are readily available at all sentinel hospitals. You may

obtain necessary stocks of Oseltamivir in restricted quantities from these hospitals or Medical Supplies Division only for specific indications.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you need further clarifications regarding the issue. Above circulars and guidelines are available at the Epidemiology Unit website www.epid.gov.lk

Thank you,

Dr Paba Palihawadana
Chief Epidemiologist
Epidemiology Unit

CC Secretary Health
Additional secretary
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