



HEALTH ADVISORY 0087

Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus (MERS-CoV) Infection

TO: West Virginia Healthcare Providers, Hospitals and other Healthcare Facilities
FROM: Letitia Tierney, MD JD, Commissioner for Public Health and State Health Officer, WVDHHR, Bureau for Public Health

DATE: May 21, 2014

LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENTS: PLEASE DISTRIBUTE TO COMMUNITY HEALTH PROVIDERS, HOSPITAL-BASED PHYSICIANS, INFECTION CONTROL PREVENTIONISTS, LABORATORY DIRECTORS, AND OTHER APPLICABLE PARTNERS

OTHER RECIPIENTS: PLEASE DISTRIBUTE TO ASSOCIATION MEMBERS, STAFF, ETC.

This alert is to provide an update on MERS-CoV infection in the United States. The first two imported U.S. cases of MERS-CoV have been confirmed. These cases were healthcare workers who traveled from Saudi Arabia to the United States. In both instances, the cases developed respiratory symptoms during or shortly after travel to the U.S. The cases represent a very low risk of transmission to the general public. A third case of MERS-CoV, identified during the investigation, had contact with the first U.S. case. At this time, no suspected or confirmed cases have been reported in West Virginia. Standard, contact and airborne precautions should be used for any suspect or confirmed cases.

The West Virginia Bureau for Public Health would like to bring the following key points to your attention:

- For the most current information and guidance on MERS-CoV, please visit our website at:
<http://www.dhhr.wv.gov/oeps/disease/atoz/pages/mers.aspx>
- Providers should maintain **heightened awareness** for possible cases of MERS-CoV and report **immediately**, by phone, to their local health department any person who meet the following criteria:
 - A. Fever and pneumonia or acute respiratory distress syndrome (based on clinical or radiologic evidence) **AND** any of the following:
 - ✓ History of travel from countries in or near the Arabian Peninsula within 14 days before symptom onset, OR
 - ✓ Close contact with a symptomatic traveler who developed fever and acute respiratory illness (not necessarily pneumonia) within 14 days after travelling from countries in or near the Arabian Peninsula, OR
 - ✓ Is a member of cluster of patients with severe acute respiratory illness (e.g. fever and pneumonia requiring hospitalization) of unknown etiology
 - OR:**
 - B. Close contact of a confirmed or probable case of MERS-CoV
- Contact the local health department to obtain appropriate diagnostic recommendations. Your local health department will work with you to evaluate your patient's clinical status and exposure history. Testing is available **ONLY** at the West Virginia Office of Laboratory Services (OLS) and must be coordinated through your local health department.

For more information, contact your local health department or DIDE at (800) 423-1271, ext. 1 or (304) 558-5358, ext. 1.

This message was directly distributed by the West Virginia Bureau for Public Health to local health departments and professional associations. Receiving entities are responsible for further disseminating the information as appropriate to the target audience.

Categories of Health Alert messages:

Health Alert: Conveys the highest level of importance. Warrants immediate action or attention.

Health Advisory: Provides important information for a specific incident or situation. May not require immediate action.

Health Update: Provides updated information regarding an incident or situation. Unlikely to require immediate action.