



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR HEALTH AND FOOD SAFETY

Public health, country knowledge, crisis management
Crisis management and preparedness in health

Luxembourg, 31 January 2020

Health Security Committee

Summary

The cluster of pneumonia cases associated with novel Coronavirus in Wuhan, China

Chair: Wolfgang Philipp, SANTE C3

Audio participants:

AT, BE, BG, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, HR, LT, IE, IS, MT, NL, NO, PO, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK, UK, DG DEVCO, EEAS, ENV, HR MS, JRC, JUST, MOVE, RTD, ECDC, EMA

Key Conclusions

1. Public Health Emergencies of International Concern (PHEIC): The HSC noted the PHEIC recommendations in comparison to the recommendations issued by WHO on 23 January 2020, which Member States and the EU are already actively following. There were no specific requests to the Commission for additional support, in taking forward the measures recommended by the PHEIC.
2. Research: The Commission highlighted that a Commission research proposal has just been launched for vaccines for the novel corona virus, for EUR 10 million.
3. Clinical networks: The PREPARE consortium – an EU funded network for harmonized large-scale clinical research studies in infectious diseases – seeks collaboration with countries to optimize their work on the clinical treatment protocols of the 2019-nCoV, ensuring the best treatment regime for future patients. Member states were asked to connect their specialised hospitals treating nCoV infected patients with the network.
4. Laboratories: The Commission noted that the Joint Action SHARP, has indicated one of their partners, Erasmus MC, has offered help for providing real-time RT-PCR for detection. If a country has suspected cases of 2019-nCoV and need support for the detection, they may send samples to the EMC. If needed, the Joint Action would cover the costs of shipment of samples. The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) has also shared a list of laboratories in the EU/EEA that have offered to provide support in primary diagnostic testing/and or confirmation. This enables rolling out a strong laboratory network across the EU.

5. Case definition: following discussions of the updated case definition for surveillance provided by ECDC, the ECDC will contact technical counterparts in Member States to explore what further refinements may be needed.
6. Points of entry: For the management of Points of Entry, Member States have at their disposal the World Health Organization's guidelines and detailed guidance provided by the EU funded Joint Action EU Healthy Gateways, for points of entry management. It was proposed that Member States work in line with these. The Joint Action Healthy Gateways will provide a webinar on using the guidance next week to which experts from all countries are invited.
7. Medical countermeasures, personal protective equipment: The Commission noted that it has been in touch with several countries regarding medical countermeasures, specifically personal protective equipment (PPE). No countries have, as of yet, requested support to obtain additional countermeasures. Four countries indicated the potential need for PPE in case of an expanding situation in the EU. The Commission will continue to provide support if need be and asked countries use the procedures agreed in the HSC to enable the exchange of medical countermeasures between countries via EWRS.
8. Information on measures: The Commission will consolidate and share all information received from countries, allowing an overview of the variety of measures taken so far. The ongoing practice of full information sharing and coordination is essential to mitigate the 2019-nCoV outbreak and ensure the EU's ability to prepare for any further transmission into Europe and to provide the care needed for cases in the EU and the limitation of any further transmission within the EU.
9. Repatriation: overview of the repatriation and reception procedures. The Union Civil Protection Mechanism was activated this week.
10. Medical evacuation: The Commission also reminded countries that there is a medical evacuation procedure in place between the Commission (DG SANTE and DG ECHO) and the World Health Organization, in case this is of need at any point for the evacuation of patients in the EU.