



**MINISTRY OF HEALTH**  
SINGAPORE

MH 34:24/5

2 Jan 2020

All registered medical practitioners

**MOH CIRCULAR 04/2020**

**VIRAL PNEUMONIA OF UNKNOWN CAUSE IN WUHAN CITY, CHINA**

The Ministry of Health has been monitoring the development of a cluster of severe pneumonia of unknown cause in Wuhan city, Hubei Province of China. As of 31 December 2019, the Wuhan Health Authorities had identified 27 cases. Seven of these cases were reported to be in critical condition while the remaining cases were stable.

2. Since the start of December, all reported cases had been admitted to hospitals in the city with presumptive viral pneumonia. The clinical manifestations include fever (predominant), shortness of breath, and bilateral lung infiltrative lesions. The majority of the cases were workers at the Huanan Seafood Market, a wholesale fresh seafood market, located in Jiangnan District, Wuhan city.

3. No sustained community transmission or infection in healthcare workers have been reported to date. The presumptive aetiological agent and mode of transmission remain unknown. Further investigations by the Wuhan Health Authorities into the cause of infection, including virus typing, are in progress.

**NOTIFICATION OF SUSPECT CASES**

4. Cases who fulfil the following **suspect case criteria** should be referred to hospital for further management:

- a) A person with clinical signs and symptoms suggestive of pneumonia or severe respiratory infection with breathlessness **AND** travel to or residence in Wuhan city within the last 14 days; or

- b) A person with an acute respiratory illness of any degree of severity who, within 14 days before onset of illness, had close contact<sup>1</sup> with a pneumonia case of unknown cause linked to the Wuhan cluster.
5. Please note that **transit** in an airport located in Wuhan city is **not** considered as having travelled to Wuhan city.
6. **Suspect cases whose conditions are medically stable** should be sent to the following hospitals via the dedicated ambulance service at 6220-5298:
- **Persons aged 16 years and above** (including pregnant women) will be sent to TTSH Emergency Department.
  - **Children below the age of 16 years** will be sent to KKH Children's Emergency Department.
7. Please call for the SCDF (995) ambulance if the patient is **breathless or medically unstable** (i.e. hypotensive).
8. Please inform the ambulance operator that you are referring a **suspect case of pneumonia with relevant travel history to Wuhan city**.
9. Patients with mild respiratory symptoms and who do not meet the criteria for referral in paragraph 4 should be clinically managed as per usual practice. Physicians should advise family members and other close contacts of suspect cases to be vigilant for symptoms of fever or shortness of breath, and to seek medical attention as soon as possible if unwell.
10. **All suspected cases of pneumonia with relevant travel history to Wuhan city are to be isolated and reported to MOH immediately.** Please call the Surveillance Duty Officer of the Communicable Diseases Division at 9817 1463, followed by submission of the MD131 Notification of Infectious Diseases Form through the Communicable Diseases Live & Enhanced Surveillance (CDLENS) system at <http://www.cdLens.moh.gov.sg> or fax the MD131 form to MOH at 6221 5528 / 6221 5538 / 6221 5567.
11. For clarification on this circular, please email [MOH\\_INFO@moh.gov.sg](mailto:MOH_INFO@moh.gov.sg).



A/PROF BENJAMIN ONG  
DIRECTOR OF MEDICAL SERVICES  
MINISTRY OF HEALTH

---

<sup>1</sup> Close contact is defined as:

- Anyone who provided care for the patient, including a health care worker or family member, or who had other similarly close physical contact;
- Anyone who stayed (e.g. lived with, visited) at the same place as a case.