

**Thailand and the Influenza A (H1N1): Information for Visitors
(Update # 8, as of 29 June 2009)**

- As of 29 June, 2009 the Ministry of Public Health of Thailand has confirmed 3 cases of death related to influenza A H1N1. One is a 40-year-old Thai woman with congenital heart condition, the other is a 42-year-old Thai man who suffered from high fever and pneumonia, and the third is a 21-year-old Royal Thai Navy personnel. The Ministry of Public Health has tasked a technical team to investigate on the cases to find more information about risk factors of influenza A (H1N1). **Nevertheless, Mr. Witthaya Kaewparadai, Minister of Public Health, expressed confidence that Thailand's Public Health system could still handle the situation and contain the spread of the virus.**

- Since 12 May 2009, the Ministry of Public Health has reported the accumulated number of over 1,300 laboratory-confirmed cases of influenza A (H1N1) infection in Thailand, with three fatalities. **Of these cases, most have been treated, fully recovered, and discharged from hospitals.** Those still hospitalized are recovering under the care of public health authorities*. All confirmed cases have been duly reported to the World Health Organization (WHO) in accordance with the International Health Regulations (2005).

- Of those confirmed cases, some are travelers, both Thais and foreigners, who arrived in Thailand from affected areas. Others appear to be cases of transmission from close contact with those infected within Thailand. As a preventive measure, those in close contact with those known to be infected are undergoing close monitoring from the Ministry of Public Health.

- The rapid identification of patients with A (H1N1) infection in Thailand is due to the intensive surveillance system in place in Thailand as well as excellent cooperation from the public, especially those who came from affected areas. Every patient with a confirmed A (H1N1) infection had received antiviral drugs treatment within 48 hours, and almost all have recovered. **The Ministry of Public Health will continue to prioritize disease prevention within the kingdom to limit spreading of influenza A (H1N1) to as narrowest a scope as possible. The authorities will also continue to tighten surveillance measures to promptly identify patients, to provide effective medical treatment and to promote public awareness on self-prevention from infection.**

- Thailand is thus fully prepared to cope with any outbreak, should one occur, within the Kingdom, and **the situation is still under control.** Efficient surveillance and treatment processes by Thai public health authority ensure that the **general public's welfare is not compromised.**

* *Daily report of the cumulative totals of confirmed cases found in Thailand is updated every morning and is available (in Thai language) at the website of the Bureau of Emerging Infectious Diseases, Ministry of Public Health, at http://beid.ddc.moph.go.th/th/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=2110271&Itemid=242*

- **Thailand recognizes that WHO continues to recommend no restrictions on travel and no border closures although it has raised the level of global influenza pandemic alert from phase 5 to phase 6. Hence, Thailand still welcomes all visitors.** In the light of current circumstances, however, the public health authority is implementing the following measures:

- monitoring and screening of inbound international travelers for prompt medical services in case of need,
- distribution of Health Beware Cards, health questionnaire, and advice on self-care to inbound international travelers, by collaboration between public health authority and international airlines,
- coordination with travel agencies, hotels and airlines in order to take care and give advice to travelers,
- other measures include surveillance on travelers who came from epidemic areas, cleansing of schools and public gathering places, and measures for case detection and disease control.

- For your own well-being and that of the general public, visitors to Thailand are requested to cooperate with and to follow instructions of the public health authority, both at the ports of entry and within the Kingdom. You are also requested to be alert and help keep influenza A (H1N1) at bay by taking care of your own personal hygiene. **Available global data at present suggests that a characteristic feature of this influenza A (H1N1) is its rapid spread. However, data also shows that the virus is of only moderate severity, similar to the seasonal flu, as most patients experience mild symptoms and the global fatality rate is lower than that of the seasonal flu.** A (H1N1) can be cured with antiviral drugs, and, with the exception of three cases, **almost all patients** found in Thailand have responded positively to the treatment.

- Medical services in Thailand are of international standard. Thailand also has past experiences in successfully dealing with the SARS and Avian Flu. The public health authority in Thailand thus has full confidence that, with the level of preparedness gained through our experiences, collaboration with the WHO, and cooperation from the general public, we shall be able to continue to maintain the situation under control in Thailand.

- If you have any further questions, there are three hotlines in service, namely, the Ministry of Public Health 24-hour Hotline at **+66 2 590 1994**; the Department of Disease Control Hotline at **+66 2 590 3333**; and the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration Health Department (Disease Control Division) at **+662 245 8106**. You can also visit the website of the Bureau of Emerging Infectious Diseases, Department of Disease Control, Ministry of Public Health at <http://beid.ddc.moph.go.th/eng> and the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at <http://www.mfa.go.th/web/2933.php>.

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