

Message

From: Van Tam, Jonathan [/O=EXCHANGELABS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=D29C846FC8FA4678B419C6F0DC3836F3-JVANTAM]
Sent: 15/01/2020 07:19:14
To: [Name Redacted] [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=915c0e033919434699877394a6dbd27{NR}]; Cavanagh, Cheryl [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=07dcacc8e17648f9865ff40561ec4923-CCavanag]; Dodds, Kevin [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=de217b42bf93443b9ace02930082ad6c-KDodds]
CC: [Name Redacted] [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=0ec6dd97afd9ca7954617810d16231{Name Redacted}]; [Name Redacted] [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=d21258c9254e4e32942f15c21ee78f6{NR}]
Subject: FW: Media reports of possible person to person spread

All,

Obviously this is a new development. Maria Van Kerkhove is highly trusted (by me at least) and a friend of mine of 15 years+ on the WHO pan flu/MERS circuits. She's a very good epi/modeller. The devil will be in the detail in terms of how many family clusters, how close the contact, and whether common shared sources (same food eaten, same places visited) explain or fail to explain the epi curves.

I have made a soft request via my UoN account for any epi data, epi curves and demographics she can share.

For now we do have P2P by the sound of it; but it does feel, from the statement made, like H5N1 in 2004 where we did see P2P that was largely limited to really close contacts in family and household settings, and where the length of the chains of transmission were short (e.g. person to person to person – STOP) suggesting inefficient transmissibility between humans. This was not unexpected in the grand scheme of things.

NERVTAG was right to be cautious and slightly circumspect about transmission.

We can expect CCS to want an opinion today and as I'm out at a WHO flu meeting this view is offered now.

Does this cross a CMO trigger point? Best to ask Chris. I suppose technically it does but it does not feel like it is efficient or established community transmission. The question is rather more what else do we do that we are not already doing now if the report is confirmed IDC? (perhaps very little other than worrying a little bit more).

I imagine there will be an SRG quite soon, and one option is to recall NERVTAG by phone.

JVT

From: Whitty, Chris
Sent: 14 January 2020 23:00
To: Van Tam, Jonathan <Jonathan.VanTam@dhsc.gov.uk>
Subject: Re: Media reports of possible person to person spread

Thanks. V useful. C

From: Van Tam, Jonathan <Jonathan.VanTam@dhsc.gov.uk>
Sent: Tuesday, January 14, 2020 10:08 pm
To: Whitty, Chris
Subject: Fwd: Media reports of possible person to person spread

Chris a quick heads up. Maria is from the Ferguson stable at Imperial. I trust her judgement.

JVT

From: Van Tam, Jonathan <Jonathan.VanTam@dhsc.gov.uk>
Sent: Tuesday, January 14, 2020 10:06 pm
To: Yvonne Doyle
Subject: Re: Media reports of possible person to person spread

I know Maria Van Kerkhove. I would consider her utterly reliable.

Thanks

JVT

From: Yvonne Doyle <Yvonne.Doyle@phe.gov.uk>
Sent: Tuesday, January 14, 2020 9:47 pm
To: Van Tam, Jonathan
Subject: Fwd: Media reports of possible person to person spread

Dear Jonathan,
Not sure this justifies a formal notice to CMO but sending it your way to be aware and then your call as to onward conveyance. Not surprising if correct.
Regards,
Yvonne

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

From: Nick Phin <Nick.Phin@phe.gov.uk>
Date: 14 January 2020 at 13:35:13 GMT
To: Yvonne Doyle <Yvonne.Doyle@phe.gov.uk>
Cc: Meera Chand <Meera.Chand@phe.gov.uk>, PHE.NICC30 <PHE.NICC30@phe.gov.uk>, Gavin Dabrera <Gavin.Dabrera@phe.gov.uk>, Jake Dunning <Jake.Dunning@phe.gov.uk>
Subject: Media reports of possible person to person spread

Dear Yvonne,

I just wanted to make you aware of this report from Reuters issued today.

GENEVA (Reuters) - There has been "limited" human-to-human transmission of a new coronavirus that has struck in China, mainly small clusters in families, but there is potential for wider spread, the World Health Organization (WHO) said on Tuesday. "From the information that we have it is possible that there is limited human-to-human transmission, potentially among families, but it is very clear right now that

we have no sustained human-to-human transmission,” said Maria Van Kerkhove, acting head of WHO’s emerging diseases unit.

This is a media report and we are seeking clarification from WHO on what basis/evidence this statement has been made. While I realise one of CMO’s triggers was person to person transmission I am not sure if this qualifies and would not suggest any further action until we have a better understanding of the evidence base for the WHO statement. You may wish to make CMO aware of this.

Best wishes

Nick

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