

## Preliminary investigation report

### Outbreak of influenza like illness in Kurigram

Date: April 17, 2012

#### Background

On 11<sup>th</sup> April 2012 in the afternoon (4 pm), Deputy Civil Surgeon of Kurigram district telephoned the Director of the Institute of Epidemiology, Disease Control and Research (IEDCR) to inform that about 42 students of the Nursing Institute in Kurigram had been suffering from unknown disease. Symptoms of the cases included fever, cough and occasional vomiting. On 12<sup>th</sup> April 2012 morning, an investigation team from IEDCR started for Kurigram.

#### Investigation team

1. Dr. Ashraful Alam, MBBS, MPhil (Microbiology), Ph.D, Principal Scientific Officer (Parasitology)
2. Dr. Ahmed Raihan Sharif, MBBS, MPH, Medical Officer
3. Dr. Apurba Chakraborty, MBBS, MPH, MSS, Outbreak Investigation Officer
4. Mr. Reaz, Medical Technologist
5. Fazlur Rahman, Laboratory Attendant
6. Mr. Kamal Hossain, Field Attendant (ICDDR,B)

#### Methods


We collected demographic and clinical history of the cases. We defined a case of influenza like illness as "any person (student/staff) of the Kurigram Nursing Institute suffering from fever and cough or sore throat or runny nose or difficulty breathing or conjunctivitis during the period starting from 1<sup>st</sup> April to the date of investigation". We collected nasal and throat swabs and acute serum samples from suspected cases.

#### Results

We identified 37 of the 88 students of the Nursing Institute as suspected cases of ILI. Median age of the students was 20 years. None of the teachers or officials of the institute suffered from ILI during this period. None of the cases had symptoms of any severity. Local health authorities started treatment with oseltamivir (75 mg) capsule. Nasal and throat swabs of 31 of the 37 suspected cases were positive for influenza A by RT-PCR done at IEDCR, the National Influenza Center. 14 of the 19 cases tested so far have been positive for Pandemic Influenza A (H1N1) 2009.

#### Conclusion

This was an outbreak of influenza caused by Pandemic Influenza A (H1N1) 2009 virus. All cases recovered following prompt treatment by the local health authorities. Outbreak of such illness in nursing institute dormitories indicates the close contact between the students in hostel rooms which are not spacious and have to share beds. Steps should be taken to ensure safe accommodation of students in such facilities.

  
17/4/2012  
Prof. Mahmudur Rahman, PhD  
Director  
Institute of Epidemiology,  
Disease Control & Research  
Mohakhali, Dhaka.