

Bird flu cases erupt in Cambodia

04 February 2013 | News | By BioSpectrum Bureau



Singapore: Cambodia's Ministry of Health (MoH) has reported five new human cases of avian influenza (bird flu), which were confirmed positive for the H5N1 virus in January 2013.

The five cases that have emerged, include an eight-month-old male from Phnom Penh (onset on January 9, 2013), a 17-year-old female from Takeo Province (onset on January 11, 2013), a 35-year-old male from Kong Pisey district, Kampong Speu Province (onset on January 13, 2013), a 17-month-old female from Kong Pisey district, Kampong Speu Province (onset on January 13, 2013), and a nine-year-old female from Toeuk Chhou district, Kampot province (onset on January 15, 2013).

Preliminary evidence does not support human-to-human transmission and four-of-the-cases are known to have had close contact with sick or dead poultry.

The Ministry of Health's Rapid Response Teams (RRT) have gone to the hospitals and the field to identify the patients' close contacts, any epidemiological linkage among the five cases and initiate preventive treatment as required. In addition, public health education campaigns are being conducted in the villages to inform families on how to protect themselves from contracting avian influenza.

The teams are checking records for evidence of increased ILI activity in the local health centers or any increase in number of SARI cases from the affected areas. Results from testing of those who have ILI symptoms, among close contacts for A/H5N1 influenza to date, were negative. There is enhanced surveillance for ILI and SARI in local health center and hospital for a further two weeks. Health education messages have been distributed to the community. The World Health Organization (WHO) is actively assisting the Ministry of Health in their investigations.