



Viral Pneumonia Illness Cluster in Wuhan, China

INFORMATION FOR WA CLINICIANS

KEY POINTS

- A cluster of viral pneumonia illnesses in Wuhan, China has been reported by Chinese authorities as being caused by a novel coronavirus.
- The cluster is centred at the Wuhan South China Seafood City Market.
- WA clinicians should remain alert for patients presenting with fever and respiratory symptoms who have travelled to Wuhan, China within two weeks of onset of illness.
- Place a surgical mask on any patients meeting these criteria and isolate them in a negative pressure room or single room as soon as they are identified.
- Urgently notify the Department of Health of any patients with respiratory illness and recent travel to Wuhan, China by contacting the on-call Public Health Physician (telephone 9222 2131 during office hours, or 9328 0553 after hours).

As of 5 January 2020, health authorities in China have reported a total of 59 viral pneumonia illnesses, with no deaths, in Wuhan, China. Chinese authorities have reported that the cause is likely to be a novel coronavirus. The cluster is centred at the Wuhan South China Seafood City (also called the South China Seafood Wholesale Market and the Hua Nan Seafood Market). The market sells other live animals, in addition to seafood, and has been closed since 1 January 2020.

Reported symptoms include fever, shortness of breath with bilateral lung infiltrates.

Health authorities in China are monitoring more than 150 close contacts for illness. To date, there have been no reports of person-to-person spread or transmission to healthcare workers.

At present, only people who have travelled to Wuhan, China are considered to be at risk. Travellers to other areas of China, or contacts of travellers to Wuhan are not considered to be at risk.

WA Clinicians are asked to be alert for patients of any age presenting with fever (or history of fever) AND respiratory symptoms AND travel to Wuhan within 14 days of symptom onset.

If you have a patient who meets these criteria:

- place a surgical mask on the patient
- undertake clinical assessment in a negative pressure, or private room with the door closed if a negative pressure is not available
- apply airborne, contact and standard precautions - in particular, wear a P2 respirator / N95 respirator during any assessment
- immediately notify the WA Department of Health Communicable Disease Control Directorate on-call Public Health Physician (telephone 9222 2131 during office hours, or 9328 0553 after hours).

More information is available from the WHO: <https://www.who.int/china/news/detail/09-01-2020-who-statement-regarding-cluster-of-pneumonia-cases-in-wuhan-china>

Dr Paul Armstrong
DIRECTOR,
COMMUNICABLE DISEASE CONTROL DIRECTORATE