

## **Health Advisory: Updated CDC Guidelines for Evaluation of Illness Associated with Middle East Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus (MERS-CoV) – May 6, 2014**

### **Actions requested:**

- Evaluate for MERS-CoV infection in persons who have fever ( $\geq 38^{\circ}\text{C}$  or  $100.4^{\circ}\text{F}$ ) **and** acute respiratory illness (e.g., cough or shortness of breath) **and who meet the following criteria** (even if another etiology is identified):
  - o **history of travel from countries in or near the Arabian Peninsula<sup>1</sup> within 14 days** prior to symptom onset (not including patients only transiting through airports in the region), **OR**,
  - o **close contact<sup>2</sup>** with a symptomatic recent traveler from this region who has fever and acute respiratory illness **OR** with a known case of MERS-CoV.
- **Report** patients being evaluated for MERS-CoV to Public Health immediately (206-296-4774)
- **Collect the following specimens** for submission to the WA State Public Health Lab after consultation with Public Health: nasopharyngeal swab, oropharyngeal swab, sputum, serum, and stool or rectal swab. Additional information regarding testing is available at <http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/mers/guidelines-clinical-specimens.html>.
- Clusters<sup>3</sup> of patients with severe acute respiratory illness (e.g., fever and pneumonia requiring hospitalization) without recognized links to cases of MERS-CoV or to travelers from countries in or near the Arabian Peninsula should be evaluated for common respiratory pathogens. If the illnesses remain unexplained, consider testing for MERS-CoV in consultation with Public Health.
- **Infection control & PPE: Use standard, contact, and airborne precautions** (gloves, gowns, eye protection and N95 or higher respiratory protection).
- Ill patients being evaluated for MERS-CoV not requiring hospitalization may be isolated at home in accordance with Public Health recommendations.

<sup>1</sup> Countries considered in or near the Arabian Peninsula: Bahrain, Iraq, Iran, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Palestinian territories, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Yemen.

<sup>2</sup> Close contacts are defined as a) persons providing care for the patient including both healthcare providers and household members, b) persons who lived with or visited the patient while the patient was ill.

<sup>3</sup> In accordance with WHO guidance for MERS-CoV, a cluster is defined as two or more persons with onset of symptoms within the same 14-day period, and who are associated with a specific setting such as a classroom, workplace, household, extended family, hospital, or other residential institution, military barracks, or recreational camp.

**Background:** This Advisory provides updated guidance on who should be tested for MERS-CoV infection following identification of the first imported MERS case in the US in a health-care worker returning from Saudi Arabia. As of May 5, 2014, 261 laboratory-confirmed cases have been reported to WHO. Of those cases 36% were fatal and 18% were asymptomatic. All diagnosed cases have been among people who resided in or traveled from the Arabian Peninsula within 14 days of symptom onset, or among individuals who had close contact with people who resided in or traveled from these countries.

### **Resources**

Updated information and guidance from CDC, see <http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/mers/interim-guidance.html>.

Interim Infection Control Recommendations for Hospitalized Patients with MERS-CoV

<http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/mers/infection-prevention-control.html>.