

# Department of Disease Control

## Weekly Disease Forecast No.251\_Drowning (1 - 7 Mar 2020)

From the national disease surveillance system, this year up to 28 February 2020, the Department of Disease Control reveals 3 drowning incidents with 12 victims (4 deaths). The total deaths of last year at the same period of time was higher (22 deaths). Among the deaths, 3 were in the age group 5 – 9 years and one was a small child younger than 5 years old. Two sites of drowning were natural open water sources in the public and agricultural settings and one was in a tourist spot.

The frequent causes of drowning include lack of drowning awareness and waters survival skills among children as well as inadequate adult supervision. Other factors are lack of appropriate environmental preventive measures at a local level, floatation devices and rescue skills.



According to this week disease forecast, the risk of drowning continues during summer school vacation. Moreover, in hot weather time, children are fond of swimming with friends in natural water sources.

The Department of Disease Control therefore advises all parents to take good care of their children and never allow them to swim without adult supervision. All communities should implement preventive measures against drowning, i.e. 1) survey for risky water sources; 2) warn the communities of drowning risk using available channels such as village broadcast; 3) install safety fences and warning signs at all risky natural water sources and provide safety devices, e.g. empty plastic gallon jugs or bottles tied up with ropes, swimming rubber rings, sticks, and belts; and 4) teach children to swim and warn them to avoid the risky water settings.

In case of seeing a drowning person, do not attempt to jump to rescue him or her as the person may be panic and pull you underwater. Therefore, you should use the measure “**shout, throw, and extend**”, i.e. 1) **Shout** for help from people nearby and ask them to call the Emergency Medical Service (EMS) hotline 1669; 2) **Throw** floatation devices such as empty plastic gallon jugs or bottles tied up with ropes or swimming rubber rings to the drowning person; 3) **Extend** objects such as sticks, belts or cloths to pull the person from the water; and 4) Give the person rescue breaths and CPR while waiting for the EMS team.

For queries or additional information, please call DDC hotline 1422.

