

Novel Coronavirus 2019 Statement

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Dear Distinguished guests and reporters

The Novel Coronavirus 2019 (2019-nCoV) situation in Wuhan, China was first reported in late December 2019. Countries in this region began implementing surveillance precautions in passengers departing from Wuhan, China since January 2020. Singapore, Vietnam, Malaysia, South Korea, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China, the Republic of China (Taiwan), and Thailand continued to announce the number of patients under investigation (PUIs). On January 13, 2020, Thailand reported its first case of 2019 - nCoV infection in a patient, as announced by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Public Health. On January 16, 2020, Japan reported its first confirmed case of 2019-nCoV.

In Thailand, the Ministry of Public Health has been monitoring travelers from Wuhan in four airports (Suvarnabhumi, Don Mueang, Chiang Mai and Phuket International Airports) since January 3, 2020. Currently, Krabi International Airport has been added to this list, due to flights during the Chinese New Year Festival. Surveillance at hospitals has been enhanced after finding the first 2019-nCoV patient on January 13, 2020 and the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) of the Ministry of Public Health has been raised up to Level 3. Moreover, strict surveillance and monitoring is ongoing at airports, hospitals, and in the communities.

For the process of confirming a case, the diagnosis of this emerging infectious disease needs to be given carefully and concisely following the standard protocol. Signs and symptoms of a potential case are as follows: fever with symptoms of respiratory track infection, including history of traveling to an affected area, Wuhan. Laboratory testing via genetic sequencing from at least two reference laboratories, including the Department of Medical Sciences and King Chulalongkorn Memorial Hospital, Thai Red Cross Society, are required to subsequently confirm 2019-nCoV. A duration of approximately 24 hours for the laboratory testing procedure is necessary for validity, clarity, and verification of the laboratory results before an announcement of the confirmed case of 2019-nCoV. Adhering to these procedures, after disclosure of laboratory results and accounting for all aspects of consideration from three technical advisory groups of clinicians, epidemiologists, and virologists, the diagnostic agreement identified another confirmed case of novel coronavirus. The press release announced today that further information on the updated situation about the second confirmed pneumonia case of a novel coronavirus in Thailand will be disseminated to the public. The second case is a 74 year-old Chinese tourist, who was screened at Suvarnabhumi International Airport and presented with fever of $> 38^{\circ}\text{C}$ with respiratory symptoms on arrival. Bamrasnaradura Infectious Disease Institute has admitted this case. The patient is recovering, the fever has gone down, and the patient is eating normally.

From January 3-16, 2020, among 86 flights, 13,624 passengers and crew members have been screened, and 21 patients met the criteria for investigation. Most

of the cases have been found to be infected with influenza virus, and 12 cases recovered and were allowed to return home. There are two confirmed cases who have been treated in an isolation ward at Bamrasnaradura Infectious Disease Institute. The first confirmed case has recovered and has no fever. The case is currently waiting for confirmation that she is no longer infectious, upon which the doctor will then allow the patient to go home. The same protocol applies to the second confirmed case who is being treated and has been monitoring for further confirmation of no viremia before returning to home. Among the 16 close contacts of the first confirmed case and the 20 close contacts of the second confirmed case, the novel coronavirus has not been found.

The Ministry of Public Health confirmed its readiness to cope with this public health threat by implementing the following disease prevention and surveillance measures in four aspects, including: 1) capabilities of disease surveillance, screening checkpoints and isolation among patients. There is strict screening of passengers who take direct flights from Wuhan, China. 2) providing a diagnosis and treatment to patients under investigation 3) referring the suspected 2019-nCoV patients to negative pressure rooms at public and private hospitals and 4) enhanced surveillance in areas of tourist attractions countrywide. For further information, please call the DDC Hotline 1422.
