CDC Daily Key Points

Coronavirus Disease 2019 ("COVID-19") Outbreak

February 29, 2020

All content updated since February 27 is shown in colored text.

MAIN KEY POINTS

- There is an expanding global outbreak of respiratory illness named "COVID-19" caused by a novel (new) coronavirus.
- The outbreak began in China but is spreading worldwide, including the United States.
- COVID-19 is threatening to cause a pandemic.
- The U.S. public health response is aggressive and multi-layered, with the goal of detecting introductions of this virus in the United States and reducing the potential spread and impact of this virus.
- This aggressive response has helped to limit the number of U.S. cases in the United States.
- As the virus continues to spread internationally and in the United States, it becomes harder and harder contain its spread.
- This week, several instances of infection with the virus that causes COVID-19 occurred in people with no travel history and no known source of exposure.
- These possible instances of community spread occurred in California, Washington and Oregon.
- In Washington three patients were reported who had tested presumptive-positive for the virus that causes COVID-19 at the state.
 - These included a person who died, an infected hospitalized health care worker and a potential outbreak in a long-term care facility.
 - See Possible Washington Cluster section
- The U.S. expects to detect more introductions of COVID-19 through travel, as well as more person-to-person spread and community transmission of this virus.
- Aggressive containment efforts will continue, including ongoing use of isolation and quarantine measures to decrease introductions and spread of the virus.
 - On February 29, the U.S. government announced it was suspending entry of foreign nationals who have been in Iran within the past 14 days.
- In affected communities, local authorities will implement other measures too, including Nonpharmaceutical Interventions (NPIs).
- Local authorities will determine which NPIs to implement, taking into account current circumstances in their communities.
- <u>Nonpharmaceutical Interventions</u> are actions, apart from getting vaccinated and taking medicine, that people and communities can take to help slow the spread of illnesses like pandemic flu or COVID-19.
- The purpose of most NPIs is to help reduce spread of illness by maintaining or increasing distance between people.
- Social distancing measures are an important weapon to fight the spread of this virus and also can reduce the impact of this virus on communities as a whole.
- The potential public health threat posed by COVID-19 is high, both globally and to the United States.

- But individual risk is dependent on exposure.
- What is currently known about the potential cases of community spread has raised the level of concern about the immediate threat for COVID-19 for certain communities.
- For the general American public, who are unlikely to be exposed to this virus at this time, the immediate health risk from COVID-19 is considered low.
- People in communities where ongoing community spread with the virus that causes COVID-19 has been reported are at elevated though still relatively low risk of exposure.
- Healthcare workers caring for patients with COVID-19 are at elevated risk of exposure.
- Close contacts of persons with COVID-19 also are at elevated risk of exposure.
- Travelers returning from affected locations internationally where community spread is occurring also are at elevated risk of exposure.
- CDC has developed guidance to help in the risk assessment and management of people with potential exposures to COVID-19.
- While still taking every effort to prevent a pandemic, CDC is operationalizing all of its pandemic preparedness and response plans.
- <u>Guidance</u> developed in anticipation of an influenza pandemic is being repurposed and adapted for COVID-19.
- Public health partners are encouraged to review their pandemic preparedness plans at this time.

SITUATION UPDATE

• This is a rapidly evolving situation. CDC is constantly reviewing and updating its guidance as needed.

International

- To date, 60 international locations (including the U.S.) have reported confirmed cases of COVID-19, most recently Azerbaijan, Iceland, and Monaco.
- CDC is reviewing and updating its travel guidance daily.
- To date, CDC has issued:
 - Level 3 Travel Health Notices (Avoid Nonessential Travel) for China, Iran, Italy, and South Korea.
 - Level 2 Travel Health Notices (Practice Enhanced Precautions) for Japan.
 - Level 1 Travel Health Notices (Practice Usual Precautions) for Hong Kong.
- CDC also recommends that all travelers reconsider cruise ship voyages into or within Asia at this time.
 - This is consistent with guidance by the U.S. State Department.

Domestic

- CDC is reporting confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the United States in two categories:
 - 1. Cases detected through our domestic public health systems, and
 - 2. Cases among people who were repatriated via U.S. State Department flights from Wuhan, China and from the *Diamond Princess* cruise ship (Japan).
- 22 cases of COVID-19 have been detected through U.S. public health surveillance.
 - Six of these cases occurred through person-to-person spread.

- On February 26, <u>CDC confirmed</u> what is potentially the first instance of community spread with the virus that causes COVID in Sacramento, CA.
- Late on February 28, <u>CDC announced three more possible instances of community-acquired COVID-19</u>—one each in California, Oregon, and the state of Washington.
- On February 29, CDC and public health officials in the state of Washington reported three hospitalized patients who have tested presumptive-positive for the virus that causes COVID-19. All of these are potential cases of community spread.
 - One of the patients has died. This is the first reported death in the United States from COVID-19.
 - See Possible Washington Cluster section
- Community spread means spread of an illness for which the source of infection is unknown.
- It's also possible, however, that these patients may have been exposed to a returned traveler who was infected.
- CDC is supporting investigations locations with possible community spread.
- People who were exposed to these patients during their infection are at some level of risk depending on their exposure.
- Based on what is known about how this virus behaves, additional cases among people who have had contact with these patients, especially those who have had close, prolonged contact, are expected.
- This could include family members and potentially healthcare workers who cared for the patients.
- All the remaining cases detected through the U.S. public health system were in persons who had travel to areas with ongoing community transmission.
- 47 cases of COVID-19 have been detected among the 1,100+ people repatriated from Hubei Province, China and the *Diamond Princess*.
 - 3 people were repatriated from Wuhan.
 - 44 people were repatriated from the Diamond Princess, an increase of 2 since yesterday.
- Almost all of the people from the Wuhan flights who were quarantined have finished their 14day quarantine period.
- On Monday, most of the passengers from the Diamond Princess will complete their 14-day quarantine period.
- Patients who tested positive during their quarantine will remain in isolation. A small number of close contacts of those patients (for instance, spouses who have been living with them) who are at increased risk will have their quarantines extended.

WHAT'S NEW:

- On February 28 CDC issued a health alert network update titled: "Update and Interim Guidance on Outbreak of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)."
- CDC has been watching the increased spread of this virus across the world and worked with partners on an updated <u>PUI definition</u>.

- The updated PUI definition takes into account the new geographic spread of the virus and includes a list of affected areas with widespread or sustained community spread. This list is dynamic and will change as our travel guidance is revised.
- CDC has posted "<u>Community Mitigation Guidance for COVID-19 Response in the United States:</u> <u>Nonpharmaceutical Interventions for Community Preparedness and Outbreak Response</u>."

WHAT TO DO

- While the immediate risk of this new virus for most of the American public is believed to be low at this time, everyone can do their part to help us respond to this emerging public health threat:
 - It's currently flu and respiratory disease season and CDC recommends getting a flu vaccine, taking everyday preventive actions to help stop the spread of germs, and taking flu antivirals if prescribed.
 - If you are a healthcare provider, be on the look-out for:
 - People who recently traveled from China or another affected area and who have symptoms associated with COVID-19, and;
 - People who have been in close contact with someone with COVID-19 or pneumonia of unknown cause. (Consult the most recent definition for patients under investigation [PUIs].)
 - If you are a healthcare provider or a public health responder caring for a COVID-19 patient, please take care of yourself and follow recommended infection control procedures.
 - If you are a close contact of someone with COVID-19 and develop symptoms of COVID-19, call your healthcare provider and tell them about your symptoms and your exposure.
 - If you are a resident in a community where person-to-person spread of COVID-19 has been detected and you develop COVID-19 symptoms, call your healthcare provider and tell them about your symptoms.
 - For people who are ill with COVID-19, but are not sick enough to be hospitalized, please follow CDC guidance on how to reduce the risk of spreading your illness to others.
 People who are mildly ill with COVID-19 are able to isolate at home during their illness.
 - If you have been in China or another affected area or have been exposed to someone sick with COVID-19 in the last 14 days, you will face some limitations on your movement and activity for up to 14 days. Please follow instructions during this time. Your cooperation is integral to the ongoing public health response to try to slow spread of this virus.

POSSIBLE WASHINGTON CLUSTER

- On February 29, CDC and public health officials in the state of Washington reported three hospitalized patients who have tested presumptive-positive for the virus that causes COVID-19.
 - One of the patients has died. This is the first reported death in the United States from COVID-19.
- Two of the patients are from a long-term care facility where one is a health care worker. This is the first reported case in a healthcare worker.

- Additional residents and staff of the long-term care facility who have not yet been tested for COVID-19 are reportedly either ill with respiratory symptoms or hospitalized with pneumonia of unknown cause.
- The patient who died was being treated in the same hospital as one of the other presumptive positive cases, but was not a resident of the long-term care facility.
- While there is an ongoing investigation, the source of these infections is currently unknown.
 - Circumstances suggest person-to-person spread including in the long-term care facility.
- CDC is deploying a team to Washington to support the ongoing investigation to find and identify how the patients were exposed and do extensive contact tracing of people who were exposed or might have been exposed to the patients.

<u>TESTING</u>

- An important part of CDC's role in testing during a public health emergency is to develop a test for the pathogen and equip state and local public health labs with the capacity to test for this virus.
- Distribution of a CDC rRT-PCR test to diagnose COVID-19 began to state and local public health labs, but shortly thereafter performance issues were identified related to a problem in the manufacturing of one of the reagents, which led to laboratories not being able to verify the test performance.
- CDC worked on two potential resolutions to this problem.
 - CDC developed a new protocol that uses two of the three components of the original CDC test kit to detect the virus that causes COVID-19.
 - CDC established that the third component, which was the problem with the original test, can be excluded from testing without affecting accuracy.
 - CDC is working with FDA to amend the existing Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) for the test, but in the meantime, FDA granted discretionary authority for the use of the original test kits.
 - Public health laboratories can use the original CDC test kit to test for the virus that causes COVID-19 using the new protocol.
 - Further, newly manufactured kits have been provided to the International Reagent Resource for distribution.
- Combined with other reagents that CDC has procured, this is enough testing kits to test more than 75,000 people.
- In addition, CDC has two laboratories conducting testing for the virus that causes COVID-19. CDC can test approximately 350 specimens per day.
- Commercial labs are working to develop their own tests and hopefully will be available soon. This will allow a greater number of tests to happen close to where potential cases are.
- Learn more information about <u>CDC's laboratory work</u>.

NONPHARMACEUTICAL INTERVENTIONS

- Nonpharmaceutical Interventions (NPIs) are actions, apart from getting vaccinated and taking medicine, that people and communities can take to help slow the spread of illnesses like pandemic flu or COVID-19.
- NPIs are also known as community interventions.

- When a new virus spreads among people, causing illness worldwide, it is called a pandemic.
- Because the virus is new, the human population has little or no immunity against it. This allows the virus to spread quickly from person to person worldwide.
- NPIs are among the best ways of controlling a pandemic caused by a respiratory virus when vaccines are not yet available.
- NPIs are grouped in three categories:
 - 1. Personal NPIs (personal protective measures for everyday use and personal protective measures reserved for influenza pandemics);
 - 2. Community NPIs (social distancing measures and school closures and dismissals); and
 - 3. Environmental NPIs (surface cleaning measures)
- View information about NPIs and factors to consider before implementing nonpharmaceutical interventions.

BACKGROUND

- This new coronavirus has been named "SARS-CoV-2;" the disease it causes has been named COVID-19.
- Due to potential for confusion with SARS-CoV, where possible, public communications will use "the virus that causes COVID-19."

For more information please visit the Coronavirus Disease 2019 Outbreak Page at: www.cdc.gov/COVID19.