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**Event: Wuhan novel coronavirus (WN-CoV) identified**

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**Notified by: TARGET, NIS**

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**PHE NIERP Level: Enhanced**

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**Distribution: PHE briefing note cascade; PHE microbiology cascade for onwards distribution to NHS; PHE Port Health; private healthcare providers; devolved administrations; to NHS-E for Primary and Secondary Care distribution**

**Background and Interpretation:**

This briefing note provides an update on the briefing note of 08/01/2020 (2020/002).

On 31 December 2019, WHO was informed by the People's Republic of China of cases of pneumonia of unknown microbial aetiology associated with Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China. Some but not all cases were associated with Wuhan South China Seafood City market, which sells meat, poultry, seafood and live animals. At the last report to WHO on 03 January 2020, there were 44 cases of which 11 were reported as severely ill. A Wuhan Municipal Health Commission update on 05 January reported 59 cases, including 7 critically ill patients, with no deaths. The first case became unwell on 12 December 2019 and the onset date of the last case was 29 December 2019.

On 9 January 2020, WHO reported that Chinese authorities had made a preliminary identification of a novel coronavirus from a patient hospitalised with pneumonia in Wuhan. Chinese investigators conducted sequencing of the viral genome.

Reports to date describe no evidence of significant human to human transmission, including no infections of healthcare workers.

Currently there are no known UK cases and no cases reported in countries other than China. Cases of respiratory infection in travellers from Wuhan City to Hong Kong have been assessed and the majority have been reported to have conventional respiratory pathogens; no cases of novel coronavirus have been reported from Hong Kong. Increased travel to and from China is expected around Chinese New Year on 25 January 2020. There are direct flights from Wuhan City to London. No travel restrictions are advised.

This is an evolving situation and further updates will be provided. Please check for the latest information and guidance from PHE at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/wuhan-novel-coronavirus>

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**Implications and recommendations for healthcare providers**

Health care providers should ensure that the information in this briefing note is distributed appropriately within their organisation, including to Emergency Departments and acute medical services. Patients who present with respiratory symptoms and have travelled to China in the 14 days prior to onset of symptoms should have a detailed travel and exposure history taken, asking for any travel to Wuhan City as well as the usual avian influenza risk factors.

For all patients who have respiratory symptoms with onset within 14 days after travel to Wuhan city, the immediate actions are to: ask the patient to wear a surgical mask and transfer them to a single occupancy room (preferably a respiratory isolation room and ideally under negative pressure).

Wear personal protective equipment as described in the PHE IPC guidance available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/wuhan-novel-coronavirus>.



Follow the PHE case assessment and management guidance, available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/wuhan-novel-coronavirus>.

In parallel, any patient assessed as meeting the definition of a possible case of avian influenza, should be managed [according to PHE guidance](#), in addition to the specific recommendations for Wuhan novel coronavirus (WN-CoV).

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#### **Implications and recommendations for PHE Centres**

Health Protection teams may be contacted about patients with pneumonia who have travelled to China. They should advise the clinician to take a detailed travel and exposure history and to follow the recommendations above and in the published guidance. On receipt of calls, record dates of travel, details of the return flight to the UK, and presence of risk factors for Wuhan novel coronavirus and avian influenza. Records should be linked to the HPZone context '**Wuhan undiagnosed pneumonia**'. Then follow PHE guidance for case management and testing.

#### **Implications and recommendations for PHE site and services**

Public health laboratories may receive requests to test samples from patients who have travelled to Wuhan City. Public health laboratories should undertake any routine or avian influenza testing requested, in Containment Level 3. Contact the PHE duty doctor (0208 200 4400) to arrange additional testing.

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#### **References/ Sources of information**

PHE Wuhan novel coronavirus webpage:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/wuhan-novel-coronavirus>

WHO Statement 09 January 2020: <https://www.who.int/china/news/detail/09-01-2020-who-statement-regarding-cluster-of-pneumonia-cases-in-wuhan-china>

WHO: Disease outbreak news 05 January 2020: <https://www.who.int/csr/don/05-january-2020-pneumonia-of-unkown-cause-china/en/>

Wuhan Municipal Health Commission (in Chinese) 05 January 2020

<http://wjw.wuhan.gov.cn/front/web/showDetail/2020010509020>

Investigation and initial clinical management of possible human cases of avian influenza viruses that have been associated with severe human disease

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/avian-influenza-guidance-and-algorithms-for-managing-human-cases>

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