



# Update of Novel Coronavirus from Wuhan, China

## INFORMATION FOR WA CLINICIANS

### KEY POINTS

- A cluster of febrile respiratory illnesses caused by a novel coronavirus has been identified, originating from Wuhan, China.
- Remain alert for patients presenting with fever and respiratory symptoms who have travelled to Wuhan, China within two weeks of onset of illness.
- Place a surgical mask on and isolate any patients meeting these criteria in a negative pressure room or single room as soon as they are identified.
- Urgently notify the Department of Health of any patients with fever and respiratory illness and recent travel to Wuhan, China by contacting the on-call Public Health Physician (telephone 9222 2131 during office hours, or 9328 0553 after hours).
- Only after discussion with a Department of Health Public Health Physician, obtain a respiratory and blood sample and send urgently to PathWest.

As of 21 January 2020, there have been 198 cases of a novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) confirmed in the Wuhan region of China. An additional 23 cases have been identified in individuals in China, Japan, South Korea and Thailand. Cases were initially centred at the Wuhan South China Seafood City. The recent increase in case numbers (136 new cases in patients in Wuhan since 17 January 2020) is partially due to increased surveillance and testing. The World Health Organisation have reported evidence of limited human-to-human transmission, as some cases have reported no exposure to the Wuhan seafood wholesale market.

Reported symptoms to date include fever, difficulty breathing, cough and sore throat, with bilateral lung infiltrates.

At present, only people who have travelled to Wuhan, China are considered to be at risk.

Be alert for patients presenting with fever (or history of fever) AND respiratory symptoms AND travel to Wuhan, China within 14 days of symptom onset.

If you have a patient who meets these criteria:

- Place a surgical mask on the patient and undertake clinical assessment in a negative pressure room or a single room with the door closed as soon as they are identified
- Initiate contact and airborne precautions - in particular wear a P2 respirator or N95 mask and undertake a fit check, gown, gloves and protective eyewear during any assessment
- Immediately notify the WA Department of Health Communicable Disease Control Directorate on-call Public Health Physician (telephone 9222 2131 during office hours, or 9328 0553 after hours)
- On advice of the Public Health Physician, obtain a respiratory sample for PCR testing:
  - a nasopharyngeal swab OR nose and throat swabs (swab the nose and swab the throat separately) using dry swab or viral transport media swabs, and/or
  - lower tract sample if the lower tract is involved (sputum, endotracheal aspirate, bronchoscopy collected sample)
  - serum for use when serology testing becomes available
- Send the samples to PathWest with an urgent request for 'Respiratory virus panel and Wuhan coronavirus' and specify the respiratory site and relevant clinical details.