

Ministry of Health and Population

Press Conference

May 2, 2019

Information on Avian Influenza A (H5N1) identified in Human

- 1) On 24th March 2019, a 21-year-old male was admitted for fever and cough. Throat swab sample was sent to National Public Health Laboratory to confirm suspected Influenza infection on 25th March 2019. Antiviral medication (Oseltamivir) was started from the same day which was provided from the Epidemiology and Disease Control Division (EDCD) prior to the laboratory confirmation.
- 2) The case was declared dead following respiratory complication while ongoing treatment in hospital on 29th March 2019.
- 3) After testing at National Public Health Laboratory, Teku the sample was sent to WHO collaborating center, Japan for identification of virus subtype. The result for the same was received on 29th April 2019.
- 4) According to the laboratory result received from the Collaborating Center, Japan the sample was positive for Influenza A (H5N1). This is the first reported human case of Influenza A (H5N1) in Nepal.
- 5) No additional case has been reported for infection with similar virus since then, in routine surveillance.
- 6) Influenza A (H5N1) virus usually infects birds, also sometimes leading to death. Occasionally, this virus transmits from birds to humans.
- 7) Since its detection in 1996; (according to World Health Organization) a total of 860 human cases have been reported since 2003 till date.
- 8) According to reports, more than 50% (454 cases) mortality rate has been reported following infection with this virus
- 9) Human to human transmission has not been confirmed till date.

Upcoming Planned activities:

- 1) The mentioned event in line with International Health Regulations (IHR) 2005 falls under Public Health Emergency of International concern (PHEIC). To abide by the responsibility as a member state of IHR to report other member states, Government of Nepal, will share details of the event via WHO.
- 2) Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Department, WHO South East Asia Regional Office along with WHO Nepal Country Office and concerned stakeholders will work together to strengthen Surveillance along with Comprehensive epidemiological investigation and Risk assessment for containment of Influenza.
- 3) Dissemination of health information on preventive measures is being done for prevention against Influenza.