

ECDC EXECUTIVE UPDATE

Pandemic influenza (H1N1) 2009

Issue 15

Monday, 19 October 2009

Meetings and events

12 October 2009: EU Health Minister's Extraordinary Council meeting in Luxembourg

ECDC and EMEA supported the European Commission at the extra Council meeting of the EU Health Ministers that took place in Luxembourg. The meeting was entirely devoted to the pandemic influenza (H1N1) 2009. Issues such as the availability of vaccines and vaccination strategies in Member States were discussed.

The conclusions of the meeting are available at:

http://www.se2009.eu/polopoly_fs/1.18917!menu/standard/file/Concil%20conl%20on%20pandemic.pdf

12–14 October 2009: Competent Bodies meeting in Uppsala on 'Strengthening Europe's Defences against Communicable Diseases'

ECDC Director, Zsuzsanna Jakab, gave senior health officials from across Europe an overview of the findings of ECDC's latest Annual Epidemiological Report and set out her ideas for further enhanced cooperation in Europe against infectious diseases. Professor Angus Nicoll, ECDC, gave a presentation on the experience of the pandemic influenza in the Southern Hemisphere and on what can be expected for Europe in facing the influenza pandemic (H1N1) 2009.

Director's speech:

http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/press/news/Documents/0910_ZJ_Presentation_Strengthening_Europes_defences_against_communicable_diseases_five_years_on.pdf

Press release:

http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/press/Press%20Releases/0910_PR_CB_Meeting_and_AER.pdf



Photo: ECDC director Zsuzsanna Jakab speaking at the Competent Bodies meeting in Uppsala

Stockholm, 2009

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14–16 October: Meeting in Washington on Clinical Aspects of influenza (H1N1)2009

Dr Pasi Penttinen, ECDC Crisis Manager for the Pandemic, participated in a WHO meeting in Washington on the clinical aspects of influenza (H1N1) 2009, focusing especially on severe cases.

15 October: World Health Congress, Berlin

Professor Angus Nicoll, ECDC, gave a presentation on the pandemic (H1N1) 2009, particularly on the vaccination aspects, at the World Health Congress in Berlin on the 15 October.

Weekly digest on pandemic influenza (H1N1) 2009 from ECDC's Daily Updates and from the Weekly Influenza Surveillance Overview

Aggregate numbers of pandemic (H1N1) 2009 cases and deaths in EU and EEA countries are presented in the Weekly Influenza Surveillance Overview. The following statistics are from 16 October 2009:

- The cumulative number of reported cases since the beginning of the pandemic in EU/EEA Member States totals 47 294, of which 63 are known to have died.

Discrepancies with the ECDC daily pandemic (H1N1) 2009 update are due to unsynchronised reporting related to the ongoing transition to TESSy.

ECDC Daily Updates are produced by 09.00 every morning from Monday–Friday and will include information on pandemic (H1N1) 2009 epidemiology in EU and EFTA countries. The Monday Daily Update includes information from the weekend. The Weekly Influenza Surveillance Overview is published on Fridays.

ECDC will continue to monitor the number of fatal cases by country. It must be emphasised that the numbers of fatal cases associated with pandemic influenza are likely to be gross underestimates. Access to healthcare, the quality of the laboratory network in the country, the quality of the surveillance system and the case definition used for identifying fatal cases all affect these figures and will vary from country to country.

19 October

Weekly overview of selected non-EU countries

The [Daily Update](#) on Mondays includes the weekly overview of selected non-EU countries, including Chile, Brazil, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa.

16 October

The ECDC Weekly Influenza Surveillance Overview

The ECDC Weekly Influenza Surveillance Overview is published on Friday afternoons and is available at: http://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/activities/surveillance/EISN/Pages/EISN_Bulletin.aspx

14 October

Russian National Regulatory Agency approves influenza A(H1N1) vaccines

The Russian National Regulatory Agency has approved vaccines against influenza A(H1N1) 2009. They have licensed a live attenuated monovalent vaccine, Ifuvir, and an inactivated monovalent vaccine, Pandeflu. Vaccines are produced by the company Microgen.

13 October

Pandemic Influenza (H1N1) updates from USA and Canada

The Daily Update on Tuesdays includes a weekly update on the pandemic from USA and Canada.

Please see this week's updates at:

http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/healthtopics/Documents/091006_Influenza_AH1N1_Situation_Report_0900hrs.pdf

JAMA publishes studies on in-patients treated in Mexico, Canada, Australia and New Zealand

Three new studies published online in the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) review critically in-patients treated in Mexico, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Two articles from Mexico and Canada focus on baseline characteristics of patients, treatment and outcomes of the critically ill patients in intensive care units in the respective countries. The third article from Australia and New Zealand describes the characteristics of patients, incidents, resource utilisation and patient outcomes with influenza A(H1N1)v 2009-associated Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome (ARDS) treated with Extracorporeal Membrane Oxygenation (ECMO).

The articles can be found at:

Critically Ill Patients with 2009 Influenza A(H1N1) in Mexico

<http://jama.ama-assn.org/cgi/content/full/2009.1536v1?papetoc>

Critically Ill Patients with 2009 Influenza A(H1N1) Infection in Canada

<http://jama.ama-assn.org/cgi/content/full/2009.1496v1?papetoc>

Extracorporeal Membrane Oxygenation for 2009 Influenza A(H1N1) Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome

<http://jama.ama-assn.org/cgi/content/full/2009.1535v1?papetoc>

Public Health Development

Recommendation to include influenza A(H1N1) 2009 in the 2010 Southern Hemisphere seasonal vaccines plus change of the influenza A(H3N2) component

Twice a year WHO leads a process whereby experts from the Global Influenza Surveillance Network review the most up-to-date information on the worldwide circulation of viruses and make recommendations for next season's seasonal vaccine. The meeting for the Southern Hemisphere vaccine has recently taken place. Its report (see link below) is a useful compilation of global trends, namely the emergence and spread of the pandemic (H1N1) 2009 and its eclipse of seasonal (AH1N1), and a limited but persistent emergence of A(H3N2) outside of the vaccine protection afforded by current vaccine strains. Hence the meeting recommended the use of pandemic vaccine strains in future seasonal protection, dropping the current seasonal A(H1N1) and a change in the A(H3N2) component. However, it did not go so far as recommending a combined vaccine. That will be considered at a further WHO expert meeting later this month.

http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/activities/sciadvice/Lists/ECDC%20Reviews/ECDC_DispForm.aspx?List=512ff74f%2D77d4%2D4ad8%2Db6d6%2Dbf0f23083f30&ID=666&Source=http%3A%2F%2Fstaging%2Eecdcdmz%2Eeuropa%2Eeu%2Fen%2Factivities%2Fsciadvice%2FLists%2FECDC%2520Reviews%2FAllItems%2Easpx

Second European report of transmission of the pandemic A(H1N1) 2009 influenza virus from humans to pigs (Norway)

The Norwegian Veterinary Authorities yesterday filed with the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) a case of transmission of pandemic A(H1N1) 2009 virus from a Norwegian farmer to a pig. The farmer tested positive for the virus on 07 October 2009, and the pig tested positive three days later, the report said. No other pigs in the herd of 850 were reported ill.

http://www.oie.int/wahis/reports/en_imm_0000008515_20091012_113459.pdf

UK Pandemic Influenza Clinical Package updated along with plans for significantly expanding its national capacity for intensive care

This pandemic clinical package is a set of tools designed for use by 'frontline' healthcare professionals in severe and exceptional circumstances during a pandemic. The most recent version (06 October 2009) is an update reflecting improvements in the guidance on the use of antibiotics and oseltamivir in young children. The Package has also been revised and redesigned to clarify the circumstances in which it should be used (only when high surge demand leads to the need for strict hospital admission triage in affected areas). In preparation for this, UK national capacity for intensive care of adults and children has also been increased and details of this are available via electronic links.

http://ecdc.europa.eu/en/activities/sciadvice/Lists/ECDC%20Reviews/ECDC_DispForm.aspx?List=512ff74f%2D77d4%2D4ad8%2Db6d6%2Dbf0f23083f30&ID=667&Source=http%3A%2F%2Fstaging%2Eecdcdmz%2Eeuropa%2Eeu%2Fen%2Factivities%2Fsciadvice%2FLists%2FECDC%2520Reviews%2FAllItems%2Easpx

This week's media highlights

Significant media coverage earlier this week surrounded the EU Health Council, held in Luxembourg. EU Ministers discussed the current situation with the development of pandemic influenza (H1N1) 2009 around the EU. Following discussions on how to tackle the pandemic, the current EU Presidency and Swedish Public Health Minister, Maria Larsson, re-iterated that 'we have to listen to the experts who say it's not time to lower our guard'. Vaccines and their distribution have been widely covered in the media this week as many countries start in earnest with their pandemic vaccination strategies, notably in the US, where significant activity has been covered on availability and logistics. Further, the news from the WHO, suggesting that many countries that do not currently have access to vaccines would soon be able to benefit from a vaccination donation scheme from richer countries, was widely reported.

Updates from *Eurosurveillance*

This week's edition of *Eurosurveillance* includes a perspective on the newly authorised pandemic vaccines available in Europe, two papers modelling the influence of planned vaccination campaigns in Greece and in the US on the course of the pandemic, and one paper describing the resistance of turkeys to experimental infection with an early 2009 Italian human influenza A(H1N1)v virus isolate.

Pandemic influenza A(H1N1) 2009 vaccine in the European Union

The article reports on the pandemic vaccines now available for use within the European Union (EU) from four manufacturers and describes their composition.

<http://www.eurosurveillance.org/ViewArticle.aspx?ArticleId=19361>

Use of an inactivated vaccine in mitigating pandemic influenza A(H1N1) spread: A modelling study to assess the impact of vaccination timing and prioritisation strategies

The article from Greece describes a modelling study to assess the impact of vaccination timing and prioritisation strategies on reducing transmission of pandemic influenza A(H1N1).

<http://www.eurosurveillance.org/ViewArticle.aspx?ArticleId=19356>

Pandemic H1N1 influenza: Predicting the course of a pandemic and assessing the efficacy of the planned vaccination programme in the United States

The report from the US used data on confirmed cases of pandemic influenza A(H1N1) disseminated by the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to fit the parameters of a seasonally forced Susceptible, Infective, Recovered (SIR) model.

<http://www.eurosurveillance.org/ViewArticle.aspx?ArticleId=19358>

Resistance of turkeys to experimental infection with an early 2009 Italian human influenza A(H1N1)v virus isolate

This article from Italy describes an experimental infection of 21- and 70-day-old meat turkeys with an early human isolate of the 2009 pandemic H1N1 influenza virus exhibiting an α -2,3 receptor binding profile.

<http://www.eurosurveillance.org/ViewArticle.aspx?ArticleId=19360>

Upcoming events

19–20 October 2009: ECDC will participate in a WHO meeting to discuss with Dr Margaret Chan, WHO's Director-General, proposals to finalise the remaining elements under the 'Framework for the sharing of influenza viruses and access to vaccines and other benefits',

26–28 October 2009: The ECDC-organised European Scientific Conference on Applied Infectious Disease Epidemiology (ESCAIDE 2009) will be taking place in Stockholm 26–28 October.

27–28 October 2009: ECDC mathematical modeller, Tommi Asikainen, will participate in a modelling meeting, MIDAS, in Chicago.