

Outbreak Investigation Express

Influenza Outbreak in a Psychiatric Institution in Hualien, 2014

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Abstract

A psychiatric institution in Hualien reported 8 upper respiratory tract infection outbreaks during April 17 to August 28, 2014. There were 323 residents and 8 healthcare workers in 8 different wards with symptoms of cough, fever, stuffy nose and rhinorrhea. Average attack rate was 20.1% (331/1644). Of the 33 pharyngeal swabs tested, 15 were positive for influenza A/swH1 and 18 were negative for influenza. Six patients were reported to have severe complicated influenza, among whom, four required care in the intensive unit, and two patients died. The patients at this institution have decreased immunity against diseases, poor self-care capabilities, and live in crowded conditions. The healthcare workers on wards were unfamiliar with respiratory symptom surveillance and reporting and did not report and implement disease control measures timely. Therefore, the outbreak in April spread quickly from one ward to multiple wards in the institution. Public health officials should continue to oversee the implementation of disease surveillance and reporting, implement outbreak control measures timely to prevent the spread of diseases.

Keywords: upper respiratory tract infection, influenza outbreak, disease surveillance and reporting

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