

6 BEYOND OUR BORDERS

The 'Beyond our Borders' column focuses on selected and current international diseases that may affect South Africans travelling abroad. Numbers correspond to Figure 6 on page 9.

1. Avian influenza (HPAI H5N1) – Middle East

As of 26 September 2016, a risk assessment was done to provide an estimate of the likelihood of introduction of H5N1 HPAI from recently infected countries (Lebanon and Iraq) to other countries in the Middle East region and neighbouring territories as a result of the movement of live poultry (both legal and illegal), poultry-related products and the migration of wild birds. The preliminary assessment based on the available information and uncertainties associated indicate that the risk of introduction of H5N1 HPAI for each of the nine regional and neighbouring countries or territories varies and is as follows:

- High: Iran (Islamic Republic of), Israel, Jordan, the Syrian Arab Republic and Turkey,
- Medium: Gaza Strip, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and The West Bank,
- Low: Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia,
- Negligible: Cyprus.

2. MERS-CoV- Saudi Arabia

As of 26 September 2016, there has been a total of 1456 laboratory-confirmed cases, 610 deaths [reported case fatality rate 41.9%] 841 recoveries, and 4 currently active cases

3. West Nile virus- USA

On 22 September 2016, a horse in Kentucky State tested positive for West Nile virus. The horse is reported to be in a stable condition. This is the 3rd equine WNV case confirmed in the commonwealth in 2016.

4. Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever– in Pakistan and in Spain

On 17 September 2016, a case of Crimean-Congo haemorrhagic fever (CCHF) was confirmed in Chak Gabol, Rajanpur, Punjab province, Pakistan. The patient is stable and in isolation. On 21 September 2016, a Spanish nurse who contracted CCHF while caring for a man who died from the virus, in the 1st non-imported case reported in western Europe, was discharged from hospital.

5. Rift Valley fever- Niger

As of 26 September 2016, there were 21 fatal cases of Rift Valley fever in Western Niger. There has been a total of 52 infected people in Niger's

western region of Tahoua.

6. Ebola update- Guinea, Liberia, Ivory Coast

On 15 September 2016, the Ivory Coast reopened its borders with Guinea and Liberia. On 16 September 2016, the Liberian government began implementing a national semen testing and counseling program for male Ebola survivors. Persistence of Ebola virus in semen of survivors of Ebola virus disease was documented before the 2014 outbreak in West Africa; however, the duration of viral persistence continues to exceed previous estimates. To prevent sexual transmission of Ebola, semen-testing services have been established in Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea. On 12 September 2016, the Johnson & Johnson group announced that the World Health Organization would review Ebola vaccine regimen for emergency use assessment and listing.

7. Lassa fever- Nigeria

As of 26 September 2016, there have been more than 273 cases with 149 fatalities from different parts of Nigeria. There have been 165 cases and 89 deaths confirmed through laboratory testing (case fatality rate 53.9%). The cases were reported from 23 states. There have been 10 health care workers who have been infected with Lassa virus, of whom 2 have died. Of these 10 cases, 4 were nosocomial infections.

8. Malaria- Sri Lanka

On 5 September 2016, the WHO certified Sri Lanka as a malaria-free island. Sri-Lanka has not had locally transmitted cases for the past 3 years. It is the second country in the WHO South-East Asia Region to eliminate malaria after Maldives.

Source: Division of Public Health Surveillance and Response, NICD-NHLS



Figure 6. Current outbreaks that may have implications for travellers. Number correspond to text above. The red dot is the approximate location of the outbreak or event