



**Date: 23rd January 2020**

## Wuhan novel coronavirus

---

### **The current situation**

On 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019, the World Health Organization (WHO) was informed of a cluster of cases of pneumonia of unknown cause detected in Wuhan City, Hubei Province in China. Early in January 2020 it was announced that a novel coronavirus had been identified, linked to a Seafood Wholesale Market in Wuhan City.

As of 0100 GMT 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2020, 571 cases have been reported, the majority from mainland China. Most but not all of reported cases had been or are in Wuhan, Hubei province. 95 cases are severe, and 17 deaths have been reported. To date, 15 healthcare workers are reported to have been infected.

A small number of cases have been diagnosed in travelers from Wuhan in Thailand (4 cases), Japan (1 case), the Republic of Korea (1 case) and Taiwan (1 case), Hong Kong (2 cases), Macau (2 case), United States of America (1 case).

**The situation is evolving rapidly and this information will change in hours and days.**

### **About Coronaviruses**

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses with some causing less-severe disease, such as the common cold, and others causing more severe disease such as Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS), which caused an outbreak in 2012 and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) coronaviruses, which also caused an outbreak back in 2002.

The novel virus associated with events in Wuhan has provisionally been called 2019-nCoV or WN-nCoV.

Although evidence is still emerging, information to date indicates human-to-human transmission is occurring in close contacts of infected patients and healthcare workers.

The routes of transmission or incubation period of 2019-nCoV are not fully clear yet, however, other coronaviruses are mainly transmitted by large respiratory droplets and direct or indirect contact with infected secretions. In addition to respiratory secretions, other coronaviruses have been detected in blood, faeces and urine.

### **Our preparedness**

In November 2019, Public Health Services, on behalf of the Committee *for* Health & Social Care, led a successful and well received exercise of the Channel Islands Strategic Pandemic Influenza Plan, bringing together multiple agencies to test the islands response to an influenza virus pandemic. Many of these principles are directly applicable to a novel respiratory virus infection. As a result of this the Bailiwick is in a good position to respond to the developing 2019-nCoV situation.

Public Health Services are reviewing the situation on a daily basis and will provide further briefings as the situation develops. Chinese authorities have restricted public transport to Wuhan City in a bid to limit transmission outside of the city.

Some countries have implemented screening in airports and other international departure points. From today, the 22 January 2020, there will enhanced monitoring of all direct flights from Wuhan to the UK. The enhanced monitoring package includes a number of measures that will help to provide advice to travellers if they feel unwell. We will be monitoring the situation closely to ascertain if any change in policy is required but will not, at this time, be introducing any screening locally at our ports. However, this will be reassessed as new information becomes available.

The risk to visitors to Wuhan is moderate reflecting an increase in the number of cases being identified in China and evidence that the virus has limited spread from person to person. People travelling are advised to maintain good hand, respiratory and personal hygiene and avoid visiting animal and bird markets or people who are ill with respiratory symptoms.

Individuals should seek medical attention if they develop respiratory symptoms (flu like illness) within 14 days of visiting Wuhan, either in China or on their return to the UK. They

should phone ahead before attending any health services and mention their recent travel to the city.

**Notes to Editor**

**Issued by: Public Health Services**