Dengue 3 Outbreak, Palau, December 2019 – February 2020

9th Operational Period

2020 Epi Week 5: January 27 – February 2, 2020

On Friday, December 7, 2018, the Palau Ministry of Health alerted the public of an outbreak of dengue fever following the first ever laboratory confirmation of two cases with dengue serotype-3. A year after the declaration, the Ministry of Health continues to urge the public to practice prevention to control the spread of DENV-3. Over 700 cases of dengue have been recorded between December 3, 2018 and December 17, 2019, including 266 serotyped cases of DENV-3. No cases of other serotypes have been identified since the start of the current outbreak.

During the 9th operational period (January 27 – February 2, 2020), the number of weekly reported cases shows a decreasing trend since the beginning of January of this year. As of February 2, 2020, there were four (4) new cases reported. The cumulative number of cases since the beginning of the outbreak is 806.

During this period, majority of the reported cases were male across all age group.

Symptom Profile of Cases & Hospitalization

Most common symptoms reported among dengue fever cases are fever, chills, headache, body pain, joint pain and loss of appetite, typical of dengue infection.

Response Measures

• The Belau National Hospital Laboratory and laboratories at the three private clinics in Koror have the capacity to test symptomatic patients for dengue via a rapid diagnostic test kit, SD Bioline Dengue Duo (Dengue NS1Ag and IgG/IgM).

• Confirmatory testing and serotyping is done by the Hawaii State Laboratory (HSL). Further shipment of 20 positive NS1 were sent to HSL as a routine effort to monitor Dengue serotype in circulation.

• There have been 266 cases of DENV-3 confirmed by HSL. The last DENV-2 recorded in Palau were from November 2018.

• The Palau Ministry of Health promotes the dengue 3S messages:
  • Search and eliminate mosquito breeding sites.
  • Self-protect by wearing insect repellent and ensuring a mosquito-free environment.
  • Seek early consultation if you show severe signs or symptoms of dengue.

The next report for epi week 7, will be released on Tuesday, February 18, 2020.

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