

YOUR DISINFECTION EXPERTS

21st February 2020

To date the number of confirmed infections of the novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) outbreak has reached 76,767 total number of cases with a total of 2,247 deaths. Cases have now been reported in 27 countries (situation as of 21st February 2020, 10:00 CET). There are now 1,200 reported cases outside of China, with 634 of these being from the "Diamond Princess" cruise ship. During the period since our last newsletter, the first case of the disease was confirmed in Egypt, which was also the first case confirmed on the African continent. The first case was also reported in the Islamic Republic of Iran. 2 additional deaths outside of China were also reported this week, with 1 of these deaths being of an individual who did not appear to have any travel history to China.

On the 17th of February, the WHO announced a change in how cases are reported, based on a new reporting model from China, to include "clinically diagnosed" cases of the disease (initially only from the Hubei province in China). Prior to this date, only laboratory-confirmed cases had been reported and "clinically diagnosed" cases were not. This caused a very considerable spike in the number of reported cases between 16th and 17th of February, with reported cases on 16th February standing at 51,857 rising to 71,426 reported cases on 17th February. However, on 20th of February China again revised their reporting guidelines, and decided not to continue reporting all "clinically diagnosed" cases, and instead report only "suspected" and "confirmed" cases ("confirmed" cases requiring a laboratory confirmation as before). This changing of the reporting system may continue to cause some confusion regarding the actual number of cases over the coming days.

WHO continue to work on strategies to track and monitor the disease and it's progress, and to increase knowledge regarding the virus. Among these strategies are work on developing a mathematical modelling system to estimate parameters such as incubation period, case fatality ratio (CFR) and the time between the onset of symptoms in primary and secondary cases, and the implementation of the Global Surveillance System, established in early January, in all WHO regions.

Additionally WHO have added several online courses related to COVID-19 to their OpenWHO online platform, including a general introduction to emerging respiratory viruses <https://openwho.org/courses/introduction-to-ncov> and a general introduction to Acute Respiratory Infections (ARIs) and basic hygiene measures to protect against infection <https://openwho.org/courses/eprotect-acute-respiratory-infections>

As we mentioned last week, as part of any infection prevention strategy, environmental cleaning in healthcare facilities should be carried out using disinfectants effective against enveloped viruses. Several of our product offerings are effective and can be used to help combat the spread of 2019-nCoV.

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