

Monday, June 22, 2009

TREND OF H1N1 IN RETURNING US STUDENTS CONTINUES

A worldwide trend of countries confirming cases of the H1N1 virus in students returning from the US continues. On Friday, June 19th, Ethiopia confirmed its first two cases of the H1N1 virus in two teenage girls returning from the U.S.¹ According to the WHO, Ethiopia is the fourth African country to confirm cases of H1N1 virus, along with Egypt, Morocco, and South Africa. Morocco has confirmed eight cases of the virus and all the cases have involved people returning from the US or Canada.² South Africa confirmed its first case of the virus on June 18th, in a young boy returning from the U.S.³ Egypt's first confirmed case of the virus was also a young student returning from the U.S., and since then a majority of the country's 29 confirmed cases have stemmed from people flying into the country.⁴

Algeria and Iran also reported their first cases of the H1N1 virus in people coming from the U.S. A woman traveling from the U.S. was the confirmed to be carrying the virus in Algeria on Saturday, while a 16 year-old Iranian coming from the U.S. was confirmed in Iran today.^{5 6}

COUNTRIES REPORTING HIGH H1N1 INFECTION RATES

Today, as the Philippines reported the first H1N1 related death in Asia, the Department of Health (DOH) also stated that they project 25% of the country's population to be affected with the H1N1 virus. They based their projection on the current 25% attack rate they are witnessing in the country.⁷ Based on this projection and the country's latest population statistics, more than 24 million people would be infected with the virus.⁸ The country has confirmed 445 cases of the virus, but the DOH reassured that the majority of cases have only been "mild," with 84% of people recovering.⁹

These projections in the Philippines come days after the CDC reported findings that the attack rate in some areas of the U.S., such as New York City, is about seven percent.. While seven percent is a high rate for an area like New York City, officials stressed that this rate cannot be applied to the entire country. Dan Jernigan, a Deputy Director at the CDC, stated that, "it would be inaccurate to try and take an attack rate of 7% for an area that's highly affected and apply that to the U.S. population."¹⁰

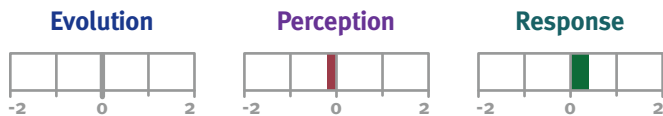


This document has been prepared by bio-era as a part of the "Thinking Ahead" service, designed to support commercial decision-making in response to the anticipated commercial and economic impacts of novel H1N1 pandemic influenza. The service seeks to monitor and evaluate current developments based on their significance with respect to three criteria: the significance of the news item for (1) the evolution of the physical disease event; (2) its effects on perceptions of threat (i.e., fear); and (3) examples of reaction or response to (1) and (2) above. To the extent possible, bio-era seeks to integrate an understanding of the particular news items identified as leading indicators or signposts within a broader bio-era scenario-based decision-support framework. To learn more about the service, the scenarios framework, or to enroll, please visit www.bio-era.net.

MALAYSIA TO ENFORCE STRICT PENALTIES

Friday, Malaysia’s Health Minister announced that the country will be enforcing strict punishments on people that try to hide information about contracting the H1N1 virus. Any person in or entering the country that has contracted the virus and hides or withholds information about their status may now face fines and up to two years in prison. The Health Minister explained the reason for enacting these strict measures by saying, “We have no choice but to be stricter, as this is the only way to keep the disease from spreading further.”¹¹

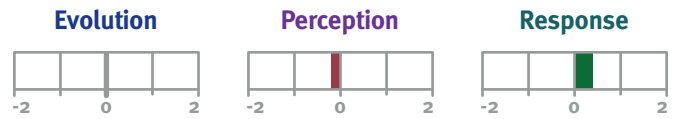
The Health Minister also stated that social distancing measures have been discussed but will not be initiated until there is a large outbreak in one area. The plan would involve closing schools, banning social gatherings, and quarantining people in a community or school where a case is confirmed.¹² According to WHO statistics as of June 19th, Malaysia has 23 confirmed case of H1N1.¹³



SCHOOL CLOSINGS CONTINUE IN ASIA

Asian countries are enacting different school closing policies in efforts to prevent the spread of the H1N1 virus. Japan’s Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology has reported 4,466 school closings throughout the country while in Hong Kong all primary, kindergarten, special and nursery schools have been closed. In Thailand, schools now have the power to cancel or suspend classes without asking the Education Ministry’s permission and Philippine schools are now being told to report any cases of flu like illnesses in students.¹⁴

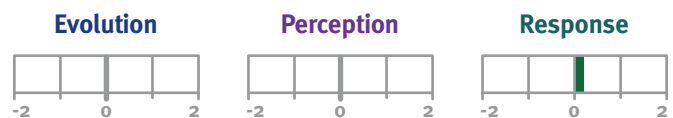
School closings have become a very common preventative response that governments are implementing in the hope of slowing the spread of the H1N1 virus.

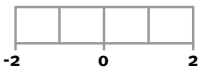


U.S. ISSUES TRAVEL ALERT FOR CHINA

The U.S. State Department officially released a travel alert for people traveling to China. In an effort to limit the imported spread of the H1N1 virus, China is imposing seven-day quarantines on travelers entering the country with flu-like symptoms. Even travelers that have been in close contact with people with flu-like symptoms are being quarantined. The alert states that the proportion of Americans being quarantined remains low, but that the selection process remains random in terms of who they quarantine. There have been reports of parents and children being separated, as well as reports of unsuitable quarantine conditions.¹⁵ Since the emergence of the H1N1 virus, China has taken very strict measures to prevent the virus from entering the country and spreading.

Airlines already struggling because of the tough economic conditions are being hit even harder as the H1N1 virus spreads worldwide. Delta Airlines released a statement today claiming that the H1N1 pandemic has impacted their annual revenues by some \$250 million. Delta’s CEO said, “The H1N1 virus, we estimate, in both our Latin America and Mexico, and particularly Asian business has impacted revenues...”¹⁶





Bio-era's judgement regarding the extent to which a development is positive or negative for: (1) the physical evolution of the disease, (2) perceptions of the disease, and (3) future disease event impacts.

	-2	0	2
<p>Physical Evolution How significant is the development with respect to the evolution, transmissibility, and virulence of the disease?</p>	Indicates or portends higher transmission, transmissibility, and/or virulence of the disease	No Net Change	Indicates or portends lower transmission, transmissibility, and/or virulence of the disease
<p>Perception How significant is the development with respect to perceptions of threat (i.e., fears of the disease)?</p>	Indicates or promotes heightened fear of the disease	No Net Effect	Indicates or promotes lower fear of the disease
<p>Response/Reaction To what degree does the response help or hinder the effort to mitigate the impacts the disease?</p>	Expected to exacerbate disease impacts	No Net Impact	Expected to mitigate disease impacts

- 1 Reuters. "Ethiopia Confirms First Cases of H1N1." June 19, 2009. See: <http://alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/LJ222265.htm>
- 2 Reuters. June 18, 2009. "First 'Swine' Flu Case Confirmed." See: <http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/IRIN/c38d0282154c0d84fa7cc7d09a9e75fa.htm>
- 3 Reuters. "South Africa Confirms First Case of H1N1 flu." June 18, 2009. See: <http://www.reuters.com/article/GCA-SwineFlu/idUSTRE55H2J520090618>
- 4 AFP. "Egypt Swine Flu Cases Rise to 18 ." June 13, 2009. See: <http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5gUvHzD-8S8ioC8zC8R-It7ijWsLA>
- 5 ECDC. "Situation Report: Update 21 June 2009." June 21, 2009. See: [http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/db900sid/MWAI-7T94BJ/\\$File/full_report.pdf](http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/db900sid/MWAI-7T94BJ/$File/full_report.pdf)
- 6 Reuters. "Iran Confirms First Case of H1N1 flu." June 22, 2009. See: <http://www.reuters.com/article/middleeastCrisis/idUSDAH241597>
- 7 GMA News. "A(H1N1) Could Hit 25% of RP Population." June 22, 2009. See: [http://www.gmanews.tv/story/165558/A\(H1N1\)-could-hit-25-of-RP-population](http://www.gmanews.tv/story/165558/A(H1N1)-could-hit-25-of-RP-population)
- 8 CIA. "Philippines." July 2008. See: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/print/rp.html>
- 9 GMA News, [vii]
- 10 CDC. "CDC Telebriefing on Investigation of Human Cases of Novel Influenza A." June 18, 2009. See: <http://www.cdc.gov/media/transcripts/2009/t090618.htm>
- 11 *The Star*. "Those Who Hide Flu Illness to be Punished." June 19, 2009. See: <http://health.asiaone.com/Health/News/Story/A1Story20090619-149520.html>
- 12 *The Star*, [xi]
- 13 WHO. "Influenza A(H1N1)-Update 51" June 19, 2009. See: http://www.who.int/csr/don/2009_06_19/en/index.html
- 14 *The Star*. "Thousands of Schools in Asia Closed to Stem H1N1 Outbreaks." June 22, 2009. See: <http://thestar.com.my/news/story.asp?file=/2009/6/21/nation/4164825&sec=nation>
- 15 US Department of State. "Travel Alert: China." June 19, 2009/ See: http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/pa_pa_4238.html
- 16 Associated Press. "Delta: Swine flu will result in \$250M revenue hit." June 22, 2009. See: <http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5gQr1HjkhNhdUyEBWnh6nNeMSJr05AD98VRJ280>