

Media Brief

TO Media outlets

FROM Dr Josephine Herman, Secretary

DATE 24 January 2020

SUBJECT 2019 Novel Coronavirus outbreak in China

Te Marae Ora Cook Islands Ministry of Health wishes to update the public regarding the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) respiratory virus outbreak in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China. 2019-nCoV is a new coronavirus that has not been previously identified and it is now spreading widely across China, parts of Asia, and the rest of the world.

Travel Advisory:

The Cook Islands does not have any travel restrictions regarding 2019-nCoV.

All arriving passengers will receive written information regarding 2019-nCoV.

For those travelling overseas, please take all practical measures to avoid close contact with people with flu-like illnesses, wash your hands regularly, cover your coughs and sneezes, and avoid contact with animals including visiting animal markets.

Te Marae Ora strongly recommends travellers avoid all non-essential and non-urgent travel to cities and areas where 2019-nCoV infection has been reported.

Those travelling overseas should also prepare for travel delays on arrival at selected airports as some countries have implemented health screening processes. This may include passenger temperature checks and requests for passengers to complete a symptom questionnaire. Travellers with signs and symptoms of illness (fever, cough, or difficulty breathing) may be required to undergo additional health assessment.

Update on 2019-nCoV

- As of 24 January 2020, a total of 845 confirmed cases have been reported to the World Health Organization (WHO). 830 of these cases (98%) are in China. There have been 25 deaths. Cases have also been reported in Thailand, Japan, Hong Kong, Taipei, Republic of Korea, Australia and the United States of America.
- This is a rapidly evolving situation and Te Marae Ora has activated our Health Emergency Response System and closely monitoring advice from WHO, the New Zealand Ministry of Health, Pacific Community (SPC) and other international sources.
- At this stage, WHO has **not** declared this a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC), although it is a Public Health Emergency for China.
- We have developed a range of resources including a 2019-nCoV Fact Sheet and will be communicating with our stakeholders and also the public through our website, our Facebook page and Twitter.

For any queries, please contact Public Health on 29110.