

Current Event

A cluster of MERS-CoV in a Private Hospital in Al-Ahassa

A cluster of eight cases of MERS-CoV occurred in a private hospital in Al-Ahssa Region during the period between 3 and 22 Oct. 2015.

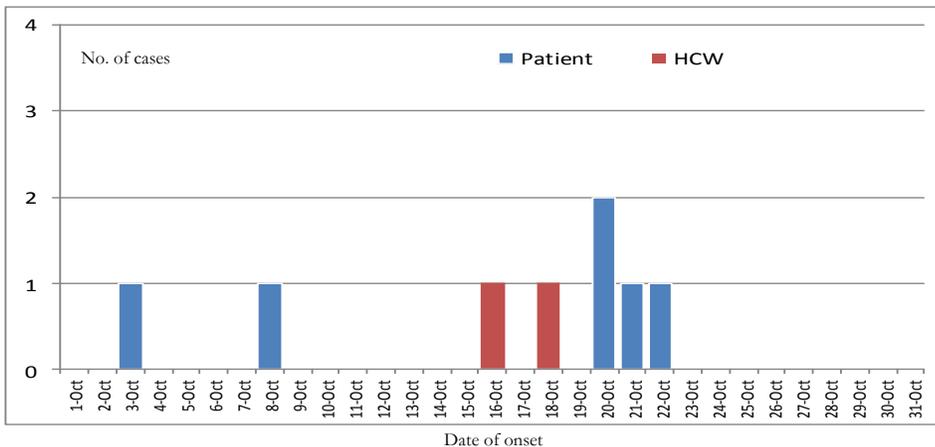
Editorial Notes

The outbreak started with two unrelated primary cases of MERS-CoV that resulted in six additional cases; four hospitalized patients and two healthcare workers (HCWs). Although the primary cases did not report contact with camels, one of them lives in the desert (*Hijra*) and is from a tribe famous for camel ownership and herding. This suggests an inevitable direct or indirect exposure to camels. The primary cases have no known history of exposure to MERS-CoV patients. Before being diagnosed as a case of MERS-CoV on 15 Oct. 2015, one of the primary cases visited three healthcare facilities and was suspected as a MERS-CoV case but the lab results turned to be negative. Contact tracing helped in identifying asymptomatic infections in two HCWs who provided care to the two primary cases. Four in-patients in the medical ward and in the ICU contracted MERS-CoV infection. Three of the in-patients were on hemodialysis but they did not share the dialysis machines or location. However, they were all cared for by one of the infected HCWs.

Delayed diagnosis of MERS-CoV and breaches in infection control measures remain the main factor contributing to large hospital outbreaks.

One of the HCWs became symptomatic on 24 Oct. 2015, and was asked to stay at home while awaiting the PCR results for MERS-CoV testing. The results came back positive on 25 Oct. 2015. One of the quarantined HCWs went for her scheduled visit knowing that she is a suspected case of MERS-CoV. This action could have exposed other people to MERS-CoV unnecessarily.

MERS-CoV in a private Hospital, AlAhssa city, October 2015



Cases of MERS-CoV: International Week (IW) No. 44: 2 - 8 Nov 2015

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Total | 2 |
| Symptomatic (S) | 2 |
| Asymptomatic (AS) | 0 |
| Healthcare worker (S) | 0 |
| Healthcare worker (AS) | 0 |

The behavior of the nurse could be attributed to a number of factors including inadequate awareness of the seriousness of the illness, false perception as she was asymptomatic, or non-compliance with public health instructions. Root analysis of violations, inadequate compliance with infection prevention and control measures and undesirable behaviors of some HCWs warrant further investigation and identification of appropriate corrective measures.

Disciplinary action may be considered to ensure adherence to and sustainability of best medical practice. In addition, regular reminders of the case definition of MERS-CoV for HCWs is needed to avoid delays in diagnosis especially in light of the high turnover of HCWs in healthcare facilities.

MERS-CoV Cases that occurred in Saudi Arabia in 2015: International Weeks 1-45 (29 Dec 2014 - 8 Nov 2015)

Laboratory Confirmed: N = 1275;
Deceased: N = 546;
Case-Fatality Rate Percent = 42.8% .

Recent Publications:

Alraddadi BM, Watson JT, Almarashi A, Abedi GR, Turkistani A, Sadran M, et al. Risk factors for primary Middle East respiratory syndrome Coronavirus illness in humans, Saudi Arabia, 2014. *Emerg Infect Dis.* 2016 Jan [8/11/2015]. <http://dx.doi.org/10.3201/eid2201.151340>

MERS-CoV in KSA 2015*

| Region | Case | Primary | Secondary | U.C. |
|------------------|------|---------|-----------|------|
| Riyadh | 292 | 101 | 183 | 8 |
| Al-Ahassa | 56 | 11 | 41 | 4 |
| Eastern Region | 21 | 10 | 11 | 0 |
| Jeddah | 17 | 9 | 7 | 1 |
| Qassim | 15 | 9 | 6 | 0 |
| Najran | 14 | 9 | 5 | 0 |
| Taif | 11 | 8 | 3 | 0 |
| Madinah | 7 | 1 | 6 | 0 |
| Asir | 4 | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| Tabuk | 4 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| Makkah | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Hail | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Al-Joaf | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Jazan | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Northern Borders | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Qunfotha | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Al-Baha | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Bisha | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Hafr Al-Batin | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Qurayyat | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 451 | 173 | 265 | 13 |

Case: Confirmed Symptomatic. U.C.: Unclassified cases

*Period: Form 29 Dec 2014 to 8 Nov 2015

