

Confirmed Points

Board Meeting of the Headquarters for Countermeasures against Influenza A (H1N1)
16 May 2009

[Provisional Translation]

The government shall spare no effort in its response to the incidence of influenza A (H1N1) and has decided to take the following measures, recognising that this incidence represents a critical issue in national crisis management. Since the confirmation of contraction of the disease in Mexico, the government has been gathering and providing information, assisting Japanese nationals overseas, and implementing measures at the water's edge (front-line measures) aimed at preventing the entry of the virus into Japan.

An examination of the cases of infection that were confirmed abroad show that while on the one hand influenza A (H1N1) is highly infectious, on the other many people have recovered after suffering only mild disorders, as is usually the case with seasonal influenza.

However, mostly among people with underlying medical conditions there is a tendency to develop severe illnesses, with deaths also reported.

Insofar as it was confirmed today that there are persons in Japan infected with influenza A (H1N1) and it is likely that the disease has begun to spread within local areas within Japan, the (national) government will take the following measures in accordance with the Basic Response Policy (adopted on 1 May 2009 by the Headquarters for Countermeasures against Pandemic Influenza) in the near term, in partnership and cooperation with local authorities, medical institutions, businesses and relevant organisations and in cooperation with the public:

1. Collect information on a broad scale and provide timely and pertinent information to the public.
 - (1) Collect accurate information on the degree of infectiousness and virulence of the virus, examination methods, measures to prevent infection, means of treatment, etc;
 - (2) Strengthen domestic surveillance;
 - (3) Respond appropriately to inquiries at high fever consultation centres (*hatsunetsu soudan sentaa*) and at consultation windows of local authorities, the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, etc.

2. Proceed apace with the development of medical systems which respond to the domestic incidence of infected persons:

- (1) Expand high-fever outpatient departments (*hatsunetsu gairai*) [at medical facilities]. The means are to be decided appropriately and flexibly by each local authority based on the conditions in each local region.
- (2) Ensure the smooth distribution of anti-influenza virus medications, etc;
- (3) As a preventive measure, administer anti-influenza virus medications to those persons who either (i) have had close contact with infected persons, (ii) are medical personnel, or (iii) are initial response personnel, etc, and who may have been exposed to the virus as a result of insufficient measures to prevent infection from spreading.

3. The following measures will be taken in geographical areas, etc where infected persons or persons who have had close contact with infected persons have been, in order to prevent the spread of infection in local regions and workplaces:

- (1) Undertake proactive and exhaustive epidemiological studies;
- (2) Call on the public when going outside to avoid crowds so far as possible as well as to wash their hands, wear masks in crowded places, consistently practice good etiquette when coughing, gargle, etc;
- (3) Call on businesses and schools to consider ways to reduce opportunities for infection to employees, pupils and so on, such as by allowing staggered commuting times to work or to school as well as commuting by bicycle, etc;
- (4) While not calling across the board to refrain from holding gatherings, sports events, etc, call on their organisers to give careful thought to the spread of infection and to reconsider the degree to which it is necessary to hold such gatherings and events, as well as to consider means of reducing opportunities for infection;
- (5) Because schools (excluding universities; ditto below) and child-care facilities can easily become the origin of infection through young children and pupils, in cases where infected persons are young children or pupils attending schools or child-care facilities, as a general rule, call for the temporary closure of schools and child-care facilities in parts of, or in the entirety of, municipalities (cities, wards, towns, villages, etc) or, depending on the

circumstances, in entire prefectures, giving careful consideration to population densities and geographical scope of communities which form units of daily life (*seikatsuken*), etc. In addition, even in cases where infected persons are not young children and pupils, if there is a possibility of secondary infections and the spread of further infection, call for the temporary closure of schools and child-care facilities in the same manner as set forth above. The period of temporary closure will continue in principle from the onset stage to the recovery period, with each prefecture to evaluate the situation weekly, on the basis of epidemiological information.

Call on universities to consider the best means by which to minimise the spread of infection, including by temporary closures.

Call on businesses to be accommodating on the work of employees whose children attend schools or child-care facilities that are temporarily closed;

- (6) Call on businesses to consider means of reducing the opportunities for infection in the course of their business operations.

4. Continue to implement quarantine and entry procedures as measures at the water's edge (front-line measures); continue to provide assistance to Japanese nationals in foreign countries where cases of infection have arisen.

5. Analyse the virulence of the virus and develop a vaccine for pandemic influenza (influenza A [H1N1]).

6. Confirm with public utilities supplying electricity, gas, water, food and daily necessities, etc that their systems of supply are ready to meet potential changes in demand and provide them with precautionary advice on their supply systems and business continuity.

7. Take the following measures as needed:

- (1) Call on consumers to take appropriate actions in purchasing food and daily necessities (i.e., not hoard);
- (2) Maintain security through enhanced enforcement of laws to counter crimes which take advantage of social disruption.