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Highlights, May 2017

- At the end of May 2017, a total of 1980 laboratory-confirmed cases of Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV), including 720 deaths (case–fatality rate: 36.4%) were reported globally; the majority of these cases were reported from Saudi Arabia (1613 laboratory-confirmed cases, including 646 deaths with a case–fatality rate of 40.1%).
- During the months of April and May 2017, three, yet unrelated, hospital outbreaks were reported. One from the Assir Region and two from the Riyadh region. A total of 13 cases with three related deaths were reported from these three hospital clusters. The date of reporting of last laboratory-confirmed case from these three hospital clusters was 15 May 2017.
- The demographic and epidemiological characteristics of the cases reported in 2017 do not show any significant difference compared with cases reported during the same period from 2012 to 2016. Owing to improved infection prevention and control practices in the hospitals, the number of hospital-acquired cases of MERS has dropped significantly in 2015 and in 2016 compared to previous years.
- The age group of those aged 50–59 years continues to be the group at highest risk for acquiring infection as primary cases. For secondary cases, it is the age group of 30–39 years who are mostly at risk. The number of deaths are higher in the age group of 50–59 years for primary cases and 70–79 years for secondary cases.

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