

13 February 2013 – To date, nine cases of human infection with the novel coronavirus have been confirmed in the Eastern Mediterranean Region. Two of the cases were from Jordan, five from Saudi Arabia and two from Qatar. Five of these patients died. Two clusters were detected – one within a family in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, and the other among health care workers in a hospital in Jordan.

The WHO Regional Office held a technical consultative meeting in Cairo, Egypt, from 14 to 15 January 2013, to: look at the natural history of this new disease; examine the source of infection, mode of transmission, transmissibility of infection and degree of infectiousness; assess laboratory diagnostic capabilities; and interpret test results. The consultation brought together relevant public health experts from the three countries in the Region that have reported cases of human infection with novel coronavirus, in addition to key partners, WHO collaborating centres and experts from the WHO Regional Office and headquarters.

The consultation evaluated all that is currently known about the cases of novel coronavirus and shaped priorities for future actions at international and national levels. It also assessed that measures for preparedness were in place for any future surge in cases and identified resources for implementation of these measures.

The meeting acknowledged that addressing gaps in knowledge required close collaboration between all partners and strong surveillance systems to early detect and verify any cluster of severe acute respiratory infections in the community or among occupational groups. Severe acute respiratory infection among health care providers should also be thoroughly investigated.

[Further details and updated guidance on novel coronavirus](#)

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