The clinical features of rotavirus gastroenteritis do not differ from those of gastroenteritis caused by other pathogens; therefore, confirmation of rotavirus infection by laboratory testing of fecal specimens is necessary for reliable rotavirus surveillance.

A regional network for surveillance of rotavirus among children less than 5 years of age was established in the Eastern Mediterranean Region in 2005 that aims to:

provide quality data necessary for studying the burden of the diseases caused by each of these organisms and, hence, assist evidence-based decision on the necessity of introduction of the currently available Hib and pneumococcal conjugate vaccines;

- provide quality data to guide clinical management and detect and monitor antimicrobial susceptibility patterns;

- help monitor disease burden to evaluate impact and effectiveness of new bacterial conjugate vaccination programmes when implemented; and

- build national capacity for long-term laboratory based surveillance for communicable diseases in the EMR countries.

Based on the regional standard Operational Procedures of rotavirus gastroenteritis in the Eastern Mediterranean Region, the case description of rotavirus gastroenteritis disease is:

Suspected case: A child aged less than 5 years of age, who is admitted to a designated sentinel hospital for treatment of gastroenteritis

 Confirmed case: A suspected case in whose stool the presence of rotavirus is demonstrated by means of an enzyme immunoassay.

Surveillance of rotavirus gastroenteritis in the region consists of case based report for diarrhoea cases reported from designated sentinel sites and routine monthly reports of line list of less than 5 years gastroenteritis cases. Surveillance of rotavirus gastroenteritis also includes case based and aggregate stool Specimen Transfer and Investigation Request Forms for admitted patients.

Monitoring the number of children under 5 who received the rotavirus containing vaccine in the countries as part of the routine immunization is also important.

Eastern Mediterranean Rotavirus Gastroenteritis Surveillance Network (EMRSN): Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), 2011. **[Draft Document - pdf 382 Kb]**

Surveillance Performance Indicators

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