

Public Health in the News

South African Health Authorities Confirm First Zika Case

Health officials in South Africa has recently confirmed its first case of Zika infection of man from Colombia. The virus has since become a public health emergency after a declaration by World Health Organization experts following a series of extraordinary surge of cases that affected much of Americas.

The man appeared to have manifested symptoms linked to Zika in his visit to Johannesburg. "The businessman presented with fever and a rash approximately four days after arrival in South Africa but is now fully recovered," said Health Minister Aaron Motsoaledi.



According to a report by Sky News, the mosquito-borne disease was believed to have originated in Africa. Until 2007, there had only been 20 documented human cases. But in 2015, infection spread rapidly which affected around 1.5 million people in Brazil to date. Since then, cases have been reported elsewhere in the Americas and the Caribbean prompting governments to advise women to delay pregnancy as the virus is linked to a number of neurological birth defects such as microcephaly in babies.

Despite its first documented case of Zika infection, health authorities maintain that there's no indication that the country will have an outbreak similar to an ongoing health crisis in the Americas. "The confirmation of this particular case poses no risk to the South African population as the virus is not transmitted from human to human but through the Aedes aegypti mosquito and or possibly from mother to the fetus in pregnant women," Motsoaledi said.

Source: *Counsel and Heal*, 22 Feb 2016

Context

The South African Health Department has stepped up security at airports to ensure that the Zika virus does not enter the country.

The World Health Organisation says the Zika virus is spreading fast in the Americas. According to the South African Health Department's spokesperson Joe Maila, "He acquired the Zika virus from Columbia, where as you know they have an outbreak of the Zika virus. However, it was diagnosed in South Africa because he travelled to our country, he felt sick with fever and then he consulted, and that's when we took tests and he was diagnosed with the Zika virus. All we need to make sure is when people are coming out , when the flights are coming in and out of the country, particularly, those that are coming from the Zika infected countries, we need to make sure that we do the spraying, so that we must prevent the mosquito that carries this virus from coming to this country," says Maila.

Sources: *SABC*, 22 Feb 2016

WAMTechnology assists key stakeholders in the health and water sectors in preventing and combating the spread of deadly diseases by means of technological software solutions. We develop, support and maintain custom software products such as electronic health/disease and medication surveillance registers. Chief among these are the ETR.Net and EDR Web Tuberculosis registers which we have developed which have been rolled out nationally.

EDRWeb
The Electronic Drug-Resistant Tuberculosis Register

EDRWeb is web-based software that allows authorized users to access a central database of multi-drug resistant tuberculosis (MDR-TB) and extensively drug resistant TB (XDR-TB) facilities, patients and clinical treatment data.

CONTACT US:
Tel: +27 (0)21 887 7161

WAMTech are specialists in implementing technology systems for improved governance, focussing on Water and Public Health Information Systems

Visit our websites:

www.wamsys.co.za
www.municipalassistant.co.za
www.ewisa.co.za