

Update on HMPV

Union Health Secretary reviews present situation of respiratory illnesses in the country, and status of public health measures for their management

No surge in the country of respiratory illness; sturdy surveillance to detect such cases

States advised to strengthen awareness among masses regarding preventive measures

States advised to strengthen and review the ILI/SARI surveillance

Posted On: 07 JAN 2025 10:26AM by PIB Delhi

Union Health Secretary Ms. Punya Salila Srivastava chaired a meeting with States/UTs in a virtual mode yesterday to review the present situation of respiratory illnesses in India and the status regarding the HMPV cases following media reports of surge in HMPV cases in China, and the public health measures for their management. The meeting was attended by Dr Rajiv Bahl, Secretary (DHR); Dr (Prof) Atul Goel, DGHS; Health Secretaries and officials of States, experts from NCDC, IDSP, ICMR, NIV and State Surveillance Units of IDSP.

During the meeting, it was reiterated that the data from IDSP does not indicate any unusual rise in ILI/SARI cases anywhere in the country. This is also corroborated by the ICMR sentinel surveillance data.

Union Health Secretary emphasised that there is no cause of concern for the public from HMPV which has been present globally since 2001. She advised states to strengthen and review the ILI/SARI surveillance. She reiterated that an increase in respiratory illnesses is usually seen during the winter months. She also stated that the country is well prepared for any potential surge in respiratory illness cases.

Human metapneumovirus (HMPV) is one of the many respiratory viruses that can cause infections in people of all ages particularly during the winter and early spring months. The virus infection is usually a mild and self-limiting condition and most cases recover on their own. It was informed that adequate diagnostic facilities are available with the ICMR-VRDL laboratories.

The states were advised to enhance IEC and awareness among the population regarding prevention of

transmission of the virus with simple measures such as washing hands often with soap and water; avoid touching their eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands; avoid close contact with people who are exhibiting symptoms of the disease; cover mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing etc.

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HFW/HMPV- VC with states/7th January 2025/1

(Release ID: 2090780)