

Confidence-Building Measure "B"

Exchange of information on outbreaks of infectious diseases and similar occurrences caused by toxins

At the Third Review Conference it was agreed that States Parties continue to implement the following:

Exchange of information on outbreaks of infectious diseases and similar occurrences caused by toxins, and on all such events that seem to deviate from the normal pattern as regards type, development, place, or time of occurrence. The information provided on events that deviate from the norm will include, as soon as it is available, data on the type of disease, approximate area affected, and number of cases.

The Seventh Review Conference agreed the following:

No universal standards exist for what might constitute a deviation from the normal pattern.

Modalities

The Third Review Conference agreed on the following, later amended by the Seventh Review Conference:

1. Exchange of data on outbreaks that seem to deviate from the normal pattern is considered particularly important in the following cases:

- When the cause of the outbreak cannot be readily determined or the causative agent¹ is difficult to diagnose,
- When the disease may be caused by organisms which meet the criteria for risk groups III or IV, according to the classification in the latest edition of the WHO Laboratory Biosafety Manual,
- When the causative agent is exotic to a given geographical region,
- When the disease follows an unusual pattern of development,
- When the disease occurs in the vicinity of research centres and laboratories subject to exchange of data under item A,
- When suspicions arise of the possible occurrence of a new disease.

2. In order to enhance confidence, an initial report of an outbreak of an infectious disease or a similar occurrence that seems to deviate from the normal pattern should be given promptly after cognizance of the outbreak and should be followed up by annual reports. To enable States Parties to follow a standardized procedure, the Conference has agreed that Form B should be used, to the extent information is known and/or applicable, for the exchange of annual information.

3. The declaration of electronic links to national websites or to websites of international, regional or other organizations which provide information on disease outbreaks (notably outbreaks of infectious diseases and similar occurrences caused by toxins that seem to deviate from the normal pattern) may also satisfy the declaration requirement under Form B.

¹ It is understood that this may include organisms made pathogenic by molecular biology techniques, such as genetic engineering.

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4. In order to improve international cooperation in the field of peaceful bacteriological (biological) activities and in order to prevent or reduce the occurrence of ambiguities, doubts and suspicions, States Parties are encouraged to invite experts from other States Parties to assist in the handling of an outbreak, and to respond favourably to such invitations, respecting applicable national legislation and relevant international instruments.

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Form B

Information on notification of all notifiable infectious diseases can be found on:
<https://www.rivm.nl/rapportagetool-infectieziekten> (password protected site)

Also, we report notification data and share outbreak information with ECDC. Notification data are freely accessible through: <https://ecdc.europa.eu/en/surveillance-atlas-infectious-diseases>

Information on outbreaks of infectious diseases and similar occurrences, that seem to deviate from the normal pattern²

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|----|---|---|
| 1. | Time of cognizance of the outbreak | 27 February 2020; first case of COVID-19 diagnosed in the Netherlands |
| 2. | Location and approximate area affected | National (and global) epidemic |
| 3. | Type of disease/intoxication | COVID-19 |
| 4. | Suspected source of disease/intoxication | SARS-CoV-2 |
| 5. | Possible causative agent(s) | SARS-CoV-2 |
| 6. | Main characteristics of systems | _____ |
| 7. | Detailed symptoms, when applicable | _____ |
| - | respiratory | x |
| - | circulatory | _____ |
| - | neurological/behavioural | _____ |
| - | intestinal | _____ |
| - | dermatological | _____ |
| - | nephrological | _____ |
| - | other | _____ |
| 8. | Deviation(s) from the normal pattern as regards | |
| - | type | _____ |
| - | development | pandemic |
| - | place of occurrence | _____ |
| - | time of occurrence | _____ |
| - | symptoms | _____ |
| - | virulence pattern | _____ |
| - | drug resistance pattern | _____ |
| - | agent(s) difficult to diagnose | _____ |
| - | presence of unusual vectors | _____ |
| - | other | _____ |
| 9. | Approximate number of primary cases | 805164 notifications in 2020 |

² See paragraph 2 of the chapeau to Confidence-Building Measure B.

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| 10. Approximate number of total cases | _____ |
| 11. Number of deaths | 11529 deaths notified in 2020 |
| 12. Development of the outbreak starting in September 2020 | First wave in March- April, second wave |
| 13. Measures taken measures also applying in between lockdowns | lockdowns, and social distancing |

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