

Japanese encephalitis on the Australian mainland

Japanese encephalitis has been diagnosed in an adult male in Queensland. The man who has recovered and been discharged from hospital is believed to have acquired the virus while working on a boat on the west coast of Cape York Peninsula. Queensland Health, the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service and the Department of Primary Industries are working to determine the source of virus and to contain its spread. This will include testing

residents of two nearby Cape York communities for evidence of infection with the virus. Local pig populations will also be tested.

This is the first case of Japanese encephalitis to be diagnosed on the Australian mainland. In 1995 three cases, including two deaths, were reported in the outer Torres Strait islands. A further case was reported in the Torres Strait in 1998.

Murray Valley encephalitis in Western Australia

A case of Murray Valley encephalitis has been diagnosed in a young male from Western Australia who is now recovering in hospital. The evidence of infection has also been detected in sentinel chickens in Wyndham in the north east of the State. Only one or two out of every 1,000 persons infected with the virus develop serious disease. Symptoms include

fever, headache, nausea and vomiting and convulsions. No specific treatment is available. Local residents and visitors have been reminded to avoid mosquito bites by wearing loose fitting clothing, using insect repellent, and ensuring that fly screens on houses and caravans are in working order.

Notice to readers

Control of Communicable Diseases in Australia Conference

under the auspices of the Communicable Diseases Network Australia New Zealand (CDNANZ)

10 November 1998, Canberra

Call for abstracts

Control of communicable diseases continues to be one of the highest public health priorities both nationally and internationally. Emerging and re-emerging microbial threats and drug resistance pose an ever increasing challenge for public health practitioners. Added to this challenge are high public expectations of protection from public health hazards, increasing scrutiny from the media, lawyers, and politicians.

This conference will study public health communicable disease control issues and examine investigations of recent disease outbreaks in Australia.

This conference is for anyone working in the field of public health or communicable diseases: officers of local, State/Territory and Commonwealth health departments; health practitioners involved in communicable diseases and infection control; epidemiologists; microbiologists; infectious disease physicians; environmental health officers and public health officers.

For abstract submission, registration forms and further information please contact:

Miss Alison Milton
National Centre for Disease Control, MDP 6
Department of Health and Family Services
GPO Box 9848
Canberra ACT 2601

Phone (02) 62898245
Fax (02) 62897791
email ccd.conf@health.gov.au