

# INFECTIOUS DISEASES

## PRIORITIES IN PREVENTION AND CONTROL

A sub-committee of the Infectious Diseases Advisory Committee has been formed to consider the infectious diseases component of the health outcomes process (February 1991 Bulletin: Setting a new agenda). This committee will make recommendations on priorities for infectious disease problems, developing appropriate goals and targets, devising strategies to attain those targets and examining ways of monitoring the effectiveness of implemented strategies.

## THE PUBLIC HEALTH ACT

Delays in processing mean that the commencement of the Public Health Act and Regulation (1991) has been postponed until November.

## NOTIFICATIONS TO AUGUST 31

Notifications of infectious diseases for August 1991 received by the end of the month are presented in Table 6. Nine of 14 (64 per cent) of PHUs have sent in data for this period.

Cumulative notifications from January 1 to August 31 are also presented in Table 6. There are inaccuracies in these figures because of time-lags in reporting, both between the source of the notification and PHUs, and between PHUs and Epidemiology Branch. Software incompatibilities and other computing problems also have created inaccuracies and are being examined. Inconsistent coding is also apparent; for example, Ross river virus cases appear mainly as arboviral infection for Orana/Far West and New England Region, but not for the North Coast Region, and hepatitis A is included in acute viral hepatitis in the Northern Sydney data.

Adoption of a uniform State-wide infectious diseases database (IDDS) will reduce many of these inconsistencies. A technical working party has been convened to improve the IDDS software. Introduction of quality assurance guidelines for infectious diseases notification is also being considered.

Table 7 provides the latest cumulative HIV data. Excluding the Westmead Hospital data, there have been 79 further cases reported since last month, bringing the total number of known cases in NSW since the start of reporting to 10,153.

## GASTROENTERITIS

About 4000 cases of gastroenteritis were reported in a large outbreak between August 8 and 15, apparently related to orange juice consumed during air travel in the southern States. Most of the cases were reported to the Victorian Health Department, but about 700 were reported in NSW.

TABLE 6

INFECTIOUS DISEASES  
NOTIFICATIONS, NSW,  
TO THE END OF AUGUST 1991

Condition	Number of cases Notified			
	Period		Cumulative	
	Aug. 1990	Aug. 1991	Aug. 1990	Aug. 1991
AIDS	33*	17*	213*	148*
Arboviral Infection (NOS)	-	2	2	389
Brucellosis	-	-	5	3
Cholera	-	-	-	-
Diphtheria	-	-	-	-
Foodborne Illness (NOS)	214	81	1707	2228
Gastroenteritis (inst.)	N/A	-	N/A	30
Gonorrhoea	26	6	269	241
H influenzae infection (NOS)	-	4	10	100
H influenzae B - Meningitis	-	-	10	1
H influenzae B - septicaemia	-	-	2	1
Hepatitis, acute viral (NOS)	-	36	2	419
Hepatitis A	3	38	20	429
Hepatitis B - acute	-	-	6	5
Hepatitis B - carrier	-	-	-	19
Hepatitis B - unspecified	45	27	280	556
Hepatitis C	2	-	19	95
HIV infection	73	32	527	550
Hydatid disease	-	-	2	-
Legionnaires' disease	4	-	22	19
Leprosy	-	-	-	-
Leptospirosis	1	-	27	25
Listeriosis	N/A	-	N/A	1
Malaria	17	8	112	58
Measles	44	13	95	146
Meningococcal infection (NOS)	17	4	39	34
Meningococcal meningitis	-	-	17	9
Meningococcal septicaemia	-	-	5	5
Mumps	N/A	-	N/A	5
Mycobacterial infection (NOS)	43	1	356	103
Mycobacterial tuberculosis	-	9	-	56
Mycobacterial - atypical	-	-	14	19
Pertussis	13	-	116	35
Plague	-	-	-	-
Poliomyelitis	-	-	-	-
Q Fever	13	1	90	143
Ross River Fever	16	-	246	117
Rubella	N/A	2	N/A	31
Salmonella infection (NOS)	113	9	1026	697
Syphilis	43	19	247	287
Tetanus	-	-	-	2
Typhoid & paratyphoid	3	-	24	17
Typhus	-	-	-	-
Viral haemorrhagic fevers	-	-	-	-
Yellow fever	-	-	-	-

\*Data January-July only

Continued opposite



## Infectious Diseases

Continued from page 93

Symptoms were predominantly vomiting and diarrhoea for one or two days.

These features are consistent with a Norwalk-like virus, and this agent has been isolated from 5 out of 30 stool specimens examined in Victoria.

An earlier than usual onset for infectious diarrhoea in children has been observed in some parts of Sydney, with a moderate rise in cases compared with this time last winter. This illness is usually caused by rotavirus, and may be avoided by adequate hand-washing after handling faeces or material such as soiled nappies, and, for children in particular, before eating.

### MENINGITIS

A 37-year-old woman died of meningococcal meningitis in late August in the Central Coast Area. She died four days after the onset of flu-like symptoms. Rifampicin was given to her family and other close contacts as chemoprophylaxis.

### MEASLES

Cases of measles continue to occur in the Hunter region. Prompt public health action by the Hunter Area PHU (emergency vaccination of susceptibles) successfully prevented outbreaks.

### HEPATITIS A

The hepatitis A outbreak in Sydney is continuing, with 474 cases reported by August 30. Eastern Sydney PHU received about 10 new cases a week in August, about the same rate as for July. Hand-washing after toilet use and before food preparation and eating are the most important methods to prevent spread of hepatitis A.

A fact sheet on hepatitis A for individuals, groups and organisations has been prepared by the Infectious Diseases Section of the Epidemiology Branch.

### IMMUNISATION

Small booklets providing information about immunisation for parents have been prepared and will be available from PHUs and community health centres. Orders for copies should be sent to the Infectious Diseases Section.

Dr Marion Carey has completed her report on immunisation in NSW. The extensive report, under review in central office, took seven months to compile. It is expected to be made available shortly.

TABLE 7

NEW DIAGNOSES OF HIV INFECTION,  
NSW, CUMULATIVE TO AUGUST 30,  
1991, BY SEX

Gender	Frequency	Cumulative Frequency
Female	397	397
Male	7788	8185
Transexual	2	8187
Unknown	1966	10,153

TABLE 8

NEW DIAGNOSES OF HIV INFECTION,  
NSW, CUMULATIVE TO AUGUST 30,  
1991, BY SEX AND AGE GROUP

Age Group	Gender			
Frequency	F	M	U	Total
01 (less than)	15	3738	127	3880
01 - 04	2	72	4	78
05 - 14	3	30	2	35
15 - 24	75	1027	35	1137
25 - 34	113	2575	99	2787
35 - 44	46	1757	59	1862
45 - 54	15	529	14	558
55 - 64	15	132	2	149
65 & over	8	35	1	44
Missing	116	1684	1754	3554
Total	397	7788	1968	10,153

TABLE 9

NEW DIAGNOSES OF HIV INFECTION,  
NSW, CUMULATIVE TO AUGUST 30,  
1991, BY SEX AND RISK CATEGORY

Risk	Gender			
Frequency	F	M	U	Total
Homo/Bisexual	15	3738	127	3880
Homo/Bisexual+IDU	2	72	4	78
Homo/Bisexual +Ts*	0	2	0	2
Heterosexual	53	112	4	169
Heterosexual+IDU	15	1027	35	1137
Drug Injector	39	141	15	195
Haemophilia	0	58	1	59
Transfusion	34	44	1	79
Transfusion + IDU	34	1	1	3
Vertical	7	7	4	18
Specified NEC	10	33	18	61
Not Reported	116	1684	1754	5581
Total	397	7788	1968	10,153

Ts: Transfusion

\*\*Westmead Hospital data to July 31, 1991

(Gender unknown includes two transexual cases)



TABLE 10

**INFECTIOUS DISEASES NOTIFICATIONS  
BY AREA AND REGION FOR AUGUST 1991**

Condition	CSA	SSA	ESA	SWS	WSA	WEN	NSA	CCA	ILL	HUN	NCR	NER	OFR	CWR	SWR	SER	OTH	U/K	Total
AIDS*	22	5	61	3	16	5	13	5	3	5	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	148
Arboviral Infection (NOS)	0	0	14	0	1	0	1	0	1	7	0	138	189	4	30	4	0	0	389
Brucellosis	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Foodborne Illness (NOS)	91	123	953	53	202	130	43	35	14	89	185	107	86	24	74	2	17	0	2228
Gastroenteritis (Instit.)	0	0	0	4	9	6	0	2	0	0	0	7	2	0	0	0	0	0	30
Gonorrhoea	11	6	125	19	15	0	2	1	7	4	6	2	36	0	6	0	1	0	241
H Infl. B	4	8	1	0	3	1	2	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	24
H Infl. Infect. (NOS)	0	0	15	0	10	12	5	2	6	9	0	0	5	2	7	3	0	0	76
H Infl. Septicaemia.	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
H Infl. Meningitis	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Hepatitis, Acute Viral (NOS)	2	0	0	19	193	11	106	2	9	12	0	1	26	0	7	8	0	0	396
Hepatitis A	42	13	312	8	15	1	7	0	3	12	3	6	4	0	1	4	1	0	432
Hepatitis B - Acute	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	5
Hepatitis B - Carrier	7	10	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	19
Hepatitis B - Unspecified	72	36	154	69	57	5	13	0	5	32	17	32	44	0	3	15	2	0	556
Hepatitis C	43	13	0	1	4	1	0	1	1	11	8	11	0	0	1	0	1	0	96
HIV Infection	49	12	121	12	22	8	26	3	2	12	13	1	2	2	1	1	5	258	550
Legionnaires' Disease	0	0	0	5	6	2	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	19
Leptospirosis	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	9	1	3	4	0	4	0	3	0	25
Listeria	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Malaria	4	2	4	0	9	3	17	3	1	4	1	3	0	0	4	2	1	0	58
Measles	1	1	12	7	20	5	9	9	3	51	13	2	3	0	1	9	0	0	146
Meningococcal Infection (NOS)	0	0	2	2	3	1	1	4	5	3	1	7	2	0	2	1	0	0	34
Meningococcal Meningitis	1	3	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	9
Meningococcal Septicaemia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	5
Mumps	0	0	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	5
Mycobacterial Atypical	8	6	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	19
Mycobacterial Infection (NOS)	0	0	18	7	29	8	12	0	11	0	3	6	2	3	2	2	0	0	103
Mycobacterial Tuberculosis	7	8	10	3	6	0	3	2	3	12	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	56
Pertussis	0	1	10	3	4	1	1	0	0	1	3	1	7	0	3	0	0	0	35
Q Fever	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	5	7	38	86	3	2	1	0	0	143
Ross River Fever	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	11	71	21	0	4	0	7	0	117
Rubella	0	1	16	0	5	1	3	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	31
Salmonella Infection (NOS)	47	59	30	58	116	60	52	1	39	17	41	58	59	14	18	10	18	0	697
Syphilis	21	6	33	28	25	4	5	0	4	16	30	17	78	3	13	1	3	0	287
Tetanus	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2
Typhoid & Paratyphoid	2	0	5	0	1	0	3	0	1	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	17

\*Data January - July only

TABLE 11

**INFECTIOUS DISEASES NOTIFICATIONS  
BY AREA AND REGION FOR AUGUST 1991**

Condition	CSA	SSA	ESA	SWS	WSA	WEN	NSA	CCA	ILL	HUN	NER	SWR	SER	U/K	Total
Arboviral Infection (NOS)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	2
Foodborne Illness	3	8	36	1	14	5	0	0	0	0	4	10	0	0	81
Gonorrhoea	1	1	3	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
H Infl. B	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
H. Infl. Infect.(NOS)	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2
Hepatitis, Acute Viral (NOS)	0	0	0	0	13	0	23	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	36
Hepatitis A	7	1	26	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	38
Hepatitis B-Unspecified	3	1	1	0	16	0	0	0	1	3	0	2	0	0	27
HIV	2	3	3	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	21	32
Malaria	0	0	0	0	2	1	2	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	8
Measles	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	10	0	0	0	0	13
Meningococcal Inf. (NOS)	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	4
Mycobacterial Infection (NOS)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Mycobacterial Tuberculosis	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	0	0	0	0	9
Q Fever	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Rubella	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Salmonella Infection (NOS)	0	0	0	0	2	1	2	0	0	0	2	1	1	0	9
Syphilis	4	1	0	0	4	0	3	0	0	1	2	4	0	0	19



# NSW PUBLIC HEALTH UNITS

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West Gosford 2250  
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**Fax:** (043) 236 276  
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