

A report from the Communicable Diseases Network Australia, 1 April to 30 June 2005

The Communicable Diseases Network Australia (CDNA) consists of communicable disease authorities from various Australian Government agencies and state and territory health authorities, in addition to expert bodies and individuals in the specific areas of communicable disease epidemiology, clinical management, disease control and laboratory diagnosis. The CDNA provides national public health leadership and co-ordination on communicable disease surveillance, prevention and control, and offers strategic advice to governments and other key bodies on public health actions to minimise the impact of communicable diseases in Australia and the region.

Influenza information kits for aged care facilities

CDNA provided advice to the Ageing and Aged Care Division on the development of influenza information management kits, which were distributed to aged care facilities throughout Australia in April 2005.

Interim Guidelines for Pre-departure Health Screening and Post Arrival Health Management of Refugees from Africa

Following a request from the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA) in mid-April 2005, CDNA developed the interim guidelines for screening of refugees from Africa. CDNA are currently providing further advice to DIMIA on the development of long-term related protocols.

Airline Contact Tracing Workshop

The Airline Contact Tracing Workshop was convened by CDNA on 15 April 2005 to consider ways of improving current processes of contact tracing people exposed to communicable diseases on airlines. Representatives from DIMIA, the Australian Quarantine Inspection Service, Qantas and airline associations also attended the workshop. Protocols will be developed as an outcome of the meeting.

National HIV/AIDS Strategy and National Sexually Transmitted Infections Strategy

In April 2005, CDNA considered the changes to the Strategies proposed by the Inter-Governmental Committee on HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis C and Related Diseases (IGCAHRD), including the inclusion of implementation plans. CDNA Jurisdictional Executive members will provide input to the Strategy Implementation forums, which will commence in early August 2005.

National Hepatitis C Strategy 2005–2008

In April 2005, CDNA considered and endorsed the *National Hepatitis C Strategy 2005–2008*, which was released on 1 July 2005.

National Australian and Torres Strait Islander Sexual Health and Bloodborne Virus Strategy 2005–2008

CDNA endorsed the *National Australian and Torres Strait Islander Sexual Health and Bloodborne Virus Strategy 2005–2008* on 18 May 2005, following consultation with and input from IGCAHRD. Following CDNA endorsement, the Strategy has been referred to the National Public Health Partnership for consideration.

Communicable Disease Control Conference 2005

The CDNA sponsored Conference was held on 2nd and 3rd May 2005 and was well attended by national and international representatives from the communicable disease management and control sector. Key themes covered by the conference included: threats posed by avian influenza, public health issues arising from the Asian tsunami, disease outbreaks, vaccine preventable diseases and the current and future challenges and opportunities for communicable disease control in Australia.

NAMAC proposed eradication program for *Aedes Albopictus* mosquito (associated with dengue fever) in northern Queensland and the Torres Strait

CDNA considered and endorsed the eradication program on 29 June 2005 prior to submitting it to the National Public Health Partnership for consideration. The proposed program will emphasise environmental vector control and the need to prevent the potential spread of the mosquito and dengue fever to mainland Australia.

Introduction of national varicella surveillance

Funding was provided by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing for varicella surveillance to complement the rollout of the National Varicella Immunisation Program. CDNA agreed to commence varicella surveillance through the National Notifiable Diseases Surveillance System.