



INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

DATE:

TO: County Health Department Directors/Administrators
County Epidemiologists

FROM: Richard G. Hunter, Ph.D., Deputy State Health Officer

SUBJECT: Dengue Fever Surveillance

ACTION: Dengue Case Follow Up/Information Distribution

Imported dengue from the Caribbean or Latin America may increase the likelihood of local transmission in Florida. A recent study conducted by Drs. Julia Gill, Lillian Stark and Gary Clark in conjunction with Florida Department of Laboratories suggests that imported dengue infections are occurring at a higher rate than reflected by passive surveillance; 18 in the study period April 1997 through May 1998 compared with a 10-year mean of 1 case (Attachment 1). An additional 41 cases reported in the study period remained classified as presumptive due to the unavailability of convalescent serum samples as required in the case definition.

We are asking your assistance to expeditiously investigate each suspected dengue (as well as other arbovirus) case and assure that appropriate samples are submitted for laboratory confirmation (Attachment 2). If dengue or other arboviral disease is suspected in a county, targeted mosquito abatement efforts may be indicated.

Your assistance is also requested to increase dengue awareness within the private medical community and provide information regarding the availability of courtesy arboviral testing at the Department of Health Laboratories in Tampa or Jacksonville. Please distribute the enclosed information packet to your infection control practitioners, area hospitals, private medical provider offices and other care facilities as you see appropriate. Thank you in advance for your participation. If you have any questions or require more information, please contact Ms. Robin Oliveri, Arbovirus Surveillance Coordinator or Dr. Lisa Conti, State Public Health Veterinarian. You may reach Ms. Oliveri by phone at (850) 245-4444 ext. 2437, SunCom 205-4444 ext. 2437 or by email at robin_oliveri@doh.state.fl.us.

Attachments

cc: Richard Hopkins, M.D., M.P.H., State Epidemiologist
Steve Wiersma, M.D., M.P.H., Deputy State Epidemiologist
Don Ward, Surveillance Section Administrator
Lisa Conti, D.V.M., M.P.H., State Public Health Veterinarian
William Bigler, Ph.D., M.S., Senior Epidemiologist
Regional Epidemiologists