

ADDITIONAL MEASURE FOR EARLY DETECTION OF MERS-COV IN SINGAPORE

Temperature screening at air checkpoints in Singapore

1 The Singapore Ministry of Health (MOH) is closely monitoring the latest global developments on Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV) infections. A statement issued by the World Health Organization (WHO) on the Fifth Meeting of the International Health Regulations (IHR) Emergency Committee concerning MERS-CoV had also strongly urged Member States to take immediate steps to improve national policies for infection prevention and control. In line with the Committee's assessment that the seriousness of the situation had increased in terms of public health impact, the Singapore Government has commenced temperature screening at air checkpoints for passengers arriving from affected countries in the Middle East, including Saudi Arabia, since 18 May 2014. This is an additional measure for the early detection of MERS-CoV.

Procedure for handling passengers with fever identified through temperature screening

2 Passengers with fever detected at the temperature screening stations will be referred to a designated area for further clinical assessment. A medical practitioner will then recheck the passenger's temperature manually, ask about his/her travel history or any history of contact with a confirmed case of MERS-CoV, and look for evidence of lung infection or severe respiratory infection with breathlessness. These are the criteria for suspected cases of MERS-CoV.

3 If the passenger fulfils these criteria, he/she will be referred to Tan Tock Seng Hospital (or KKH Women's and Children's Hospital in the case of children under 16 years of age) for further evaluation, testing and clinical follow up.

4 If the passenger does not fulfil the criteria for suspected cases of MERS-CoV, he/she will be given a surgical mask and health advisory, and will be placed on phone surveillance until his/her symptoms resolve. If his/her condition worsens while he/she is on phone surveillance, he/she will be advised to seek medical attention promptly.