

Communicable Diseases Weekly Report

Week 20, 11 May to 17 May 2015

In summary, we report:

- [Ebola virus disease \(EVD\) update](#) – Liberia declared Ebola-free
- [Australian Bat Lyssavirus](#) – ABLV-positive bat reported
- [Summary of notifiable conditions activity in NSW](#)

For further information on infectious diseases and alerts see the [Infectious Diseases](#) webpage.

Follow the [A to Z of Infectious Diseases](#) link for more information on specific diseases.

For links to other surveillance reports, including influenza reports, see the [NSW Health Infectious Diseases Reports](#) webpage.

Ebola virus disease (EVD)

On 9 May 2015 the World Health Organization (WHO) declared Liberia Ebola-free as the country had completed 42 days without a confirmed case since the death and burial of their last confirmed EVD case.

The most recent update from WHO (21 May 2015) covering the week to 17 May saw 35 cases reported from Guinea and Sierra Leone, the highest weekly total of EVD cases for over a month. The geographical area of transmission has also expanded compared with recent weeks, with a total of 6 districts reporting cases. Overall, there have been 26,933 EVD cases reported from Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone with at least 11,120 deaths.

EVD (previously called Ebola haemorrhagic fever) is a serious and often fatal disease caused by one of four Ebola virus species. A fifth Ebola species, *Ebola reston* which originated in the Philippines causes fatal haemorrhagic disease in non-human primates.

Ebola virus can cause a serious illness, with a sudden onset of fever, muscle and joint aches, weakness, and headache. The next stage is characterised by vomiting, diarrhoea, rash, and liver and kidney failure. Some (but not all) patients develop profuse internal and external bleeding. Between 50 and 90 percent of EVD cases are fatal.

Fruit bats are considered to be the natural host of Ebola viruses, with outbreaks amongst other species such as chimpanzees, gorillas, monkeys and forest antelope from time to time. Prior to the current outbreak in West Africa, there had been 24 outbreaks in countries of Central and East Africa since the virus was first identified in 1976.

There is no evidence that EVD is present in Australian bats or other animals in Australia, and there have been no human cases of EVD imported into Australia.

For more information on EVD see the [EVD Factsheet](#).

The [NSW EVD Patient Risk Assessment Algorithm for Emergency Departments](#) has been updated to note the removal of Liberia from the list of EVD-affected countries.

For EVD outbreak updates from WHO see <http://apps.who.int/ebola/en/ebola-situation-reports> .

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Australian Bat Lyssavirus

Biosecurity NSW reported this week that a bat found in a backyard in the Hunter New England (HNE) region tested positive for Australian bat lyssavirus (ABLV). The bat was removed and cared for by a WIRES carer. There were no human exposures identified.

Lyssaviruses are a group of viruses that includes ABLV and rabies. ABLV is found in all species of bats in Australia, from the small insectivorous microbats to the larger flying fox species. Rabies virus is carried by a range of mammals in many overseas countries. Both lyssaviruses are spread by bites and scratches. These diseases can be prevented by rapid and thorough cleaning of the wound and by vaccination. Almost all cases are fatal once symptoms commence.

The best protection against being exposed to rabies or ABLV is to avoid handling any type of bat in Australia, or any contact with wild or domestic mammal in a rabies endemic country. This includes bats and wild or domestic dogs, cats, and monkeys.

Only people who have been vaccinated against rabies/ABLV, who are wearing appropriate personal protective equipment, and who have been trained in the care of bats should ever handle bats or flying foxes. Anyone who comes across an injured bat should contact the local Wildlife Information Rescue and Education Service (WIRES) network on 1300 094 737. WIRES have trained staff equipped with appropriate personal protective equipment who can deal with bats safely. A veterinarian may also be able to offer assistance and advice. Do not touch the bat and avoid direct contact with any bat saliva.

For more information follow the link to the [Rabies / ABLV](#) factsheet.

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Summary of notifiable conditions activity in NSW

The following table summarises notifiable conditions activity over the reporting period (Table 1).

Table 1. NSW notifiable conditions from 11 May to 17 May 2015, by date received.

		Weekly		Year to date			Full Year	
		This week	Last week	2015	2014	2013	2014	2013
Enteric Diseases	Cryptosporidiosis	25	20	541	225	846	429	1132
	Giardiasis	70	77	1571	1350	1076	2942	2242
	Hepatitis A	1	2	47	35	33	80	62
	Listeriosis	2	1	12	14	21	23	33
	Rotavirus	3	2	134	151	178	714	508
	Salmonellosis	74	80	2187	2288	1826	4304	3483
	Shigellosis	3	6	71	110	56	210	136
	Typhoid	2	1	22	23	34	44	58
Respiratory Diseases	Influenza	94	102	1709	1178	672	20888	8403
	Legionellosis	3	2	39	35	39	72	109
	Tuberculosis	3	4	127	168	170	472	444
Sexually Transmissible Infections	Chlamydia	467	375	8896	9655	8781	22899	21088
	Gonorrhoea	103	103	2044	1973	1831	4876	4266
Vaccine Preventable Diseases	Adverse Event Following Immunisation	2	7	74	143	339	255	509
	Meningococcal Disease	1	0	13	14	11	37	48
	Pertussis	136	112	2433	772	1024	3051	2379
	Pneumococcal Disease (Invasive)	6	9	114	116	158	512	490
	Tetanus	1	0	1	1	2	1	2
Vector Borne Diseases	Barmah Forest	5	7	128	98	219	163	438
	Dengue	2	1	151	197	113	378	303
	Ross River	26	45	1237	250	260	677	512
Zoonotic	Q fever	4	7	78	75	63	190	163

Notes on Table 1: NSW notifiable conditions

- Data cells represent the number of case reports received by NSW Public Health Units and recorded on the NSW Notifiable Conditions Information Management System (NCIMS) in the relevant period.
- All 'Adverse Event Following Immunisation' reports refer to suspected cases only. These reports are referred to the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) for assessment. Data on adverse events following immunisation is available online from the TGA [Database of Adverse Event Notifications](#).
- Only conditions for which at least one case report was received appear in the table. HIV and other blood-borne virus case reports are not included here but are available from the [Infectious Diseases Data](#) webpage.

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