

MERS-CoV and Hajj 2017

The annual Hajj or pilgrimage to Mecca, Saudi Arabia will take place in 2017 from approximately August 30 to September 4. In previous years, Michigan has seen an increase in patients under investigation (PUIs) for MERS 2-3 weeks following the completion of Hajj as travelers return to the US. Healthcare providers should routinely ask patients about their travel history when an infectious disease is suspected, and evaluate patients for MERS-CoV infection if they have both clinical features and an epidemiologic risk for being a PUI. Providers should immediately contact their state or local health department about any patient who meets the criteria for a PUI.

Although there have only been two confirmed cases reported in the US since the disease emerged in 2012, sporadic cases of MERS still occur in the Arabian Peninsula. The majority of MERS-CoV infections occur in Saudi Arabia, where several healthcare-associated outbreaks have been documented in 2017. Since September 2012, 2,066 laboratory-confirmed cases of MERS-CoV infection have been reported, 720 of which have resulted in death.

Please distribute this message widely in your provider networks and contact your local health department or the MDHHS Communicable Disease Division ([517-335-8165](tel:517-335-8165)) with any questions or for more information.

Additional resources:

- CDC MERS-CoV Interim Guidance - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/mers/interim-guidance.html>
- CDC Travelers' Health - <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices/alert/hajj-umrah-saudi-arabia-2017>
- MDHHS MERS PUI Short Form - http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mdch/MERS_Investigation_ShortForm_438699_7.pdf