

Situation Report

Outbreak name	Gastroenteritis cases, Palm Hospital, May 2021		
Start date	09/05/2021	Lead agency	Palm Hospital
Date of report	16/05/2021	Report number	3

Case definitions

Outbreak case:	Anyone presenting to the Palm Hospital with watery diarrhoea (3 or more loose stools in 24 hours) or vomiting from 09/05/2021.
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Summary of investigation

On 14 May 2021, the Palm Hospital weekly syndromic surveillance report showed an increased number of diarrhoea cases when compared with the previous epi week. An outbreak response team has been formed and case information is being collected from the Outpatient and Emergency Department (OP/ED).

As of today's report (report #3), a total of 54 cases have met the case definition. The median age of cases is 14 years (range 0–62 years) and 32 (59%) cases are four years or younger. The most reported symptom is diarrhoea (n=49, 91%), followed by vomiting (n=16, 30%), and fever (n=10, 19%). Analyses by place are underway to determine if cases are localised to a particular area.

Three stool specimens have been collected and are awaiting processing at the national public health laboratory.

Cases are continuing to increase and discussions are underway with the Ministry of Health regarding prevention and response activities.

Control measures/public health action

The Health Promotion team has been engaged to support risk communication activities. The team have been delivering prevention messages among patients attending the outpatient and emergency department.

Information sessions have been delivered to staff, discussing infection control measures and the importance of admitting patients until they are well enough to go home. Staff support has been requested to collect case information.

Awaiting specimen processing from national public health laboratory for three collected stool samples.

Recommended actions

1. Patients that are admitted at the OP/ED with diarrhoea should be admitted until they are well enough to leave the hospital.
2. Epidemiological analyses by place are recommended to determine if cases are presenting from a specific area.
3. With support from the health promotion team, engage the wider community and deliver health information sessions on the prevention of diarrhoea (based on results from analyses by place).

Supporting information

The epidemic curve shows cases have been steadily increasing since 14/05/2021 (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Gastroenteritis cases by date of presentation to Palm Hospital, May 2021

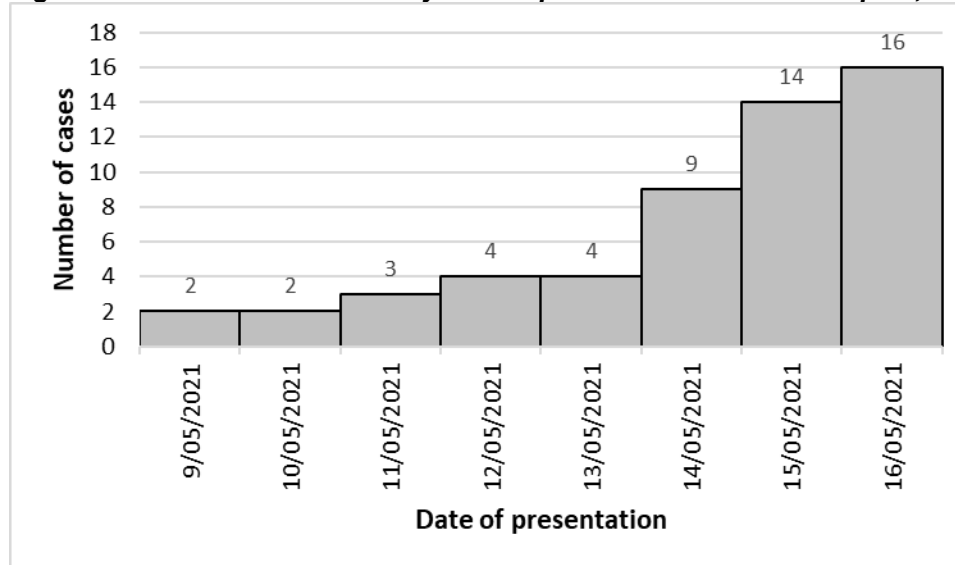


Table 1: Characteristics of cases (n=54) associated with an outbreak of gastroenteritis in Palm Hospital, presenting from 09/05/2021

Characteristics	(n)	(%)
Case numbers		
Cases	54	-
Date of presentation range	09/05/2021–16/05/2021	
Sex		
Females	25	46
Males	29	54
Age		
0–4 years	32	59
5–24 years	10	19
25–50 years	8	15
50+ years	4	7
Median	14 years	
Range	0–62 years	
Outcome		
Hospitalised cases	13	24
Deaths	0	0
Symptoms		
Fever	10	19
Diarrhoea	49	91
Vomiting	16	30