

POSTER PRESENTATION

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P043: Re-emergence of influenza a H1N1 in Saudi Arabia

NA Alzahrani^{1*}, S Al Johani²

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Introduction

Influenza A H1N1 is a novel influenza virus that is of swine source. Clinical manifestations of this virus vary from mild respiratory symptoms to fatal respiratory or/and cardiovascular complications. The new influenza A H1N1 pandemic was first identified in April 2009 in the United States and Mexico, and then spread globally. In September 10 2010, the World Health Organization announced that the influenza A H1N1 pandemic had moved into the post-pandemic period and is no longer considered a dangerous global disease. On the 15th of August 2010, the Ministry of Health in Saudi Arabia declared that the cases of influenza A H1N1 in 2010 have drastically declined to 874 cases with no deaths or serious complications.

Objectives

In this study, we will shed light on the number of cases of influenza A H1N1 infections in Saudi Arabia from the months of September to November 2012, and describe the cases where influenza A H1N1 was the cause of death in these patients, and the underlying co-morbidities that may have led to severe complications or death.

Methods

This is a retrospective study in which we reviewed our laboratory records for cases that were tested for influenza A H1N1 in the months of September, October, and November 2012. All samples were nasopharyngeal aspirates and were tested using The Xpert Flu[®] assay and performed on Cepheid[®] GeneXpert medical device system.

Results

67 patient samples were tested for influenza A H1N1 over the period from September to November 2012. Overall, there were 19 positive samples, 13 of those samples were positive for influenza A H1N1, 6 were positive for influenza A, and none tested positive for influenza B. Two patients were suffering from other co-morbidities and expired as a result of influenza A H1N1 infection.

Conclusion

Vaccination for influenza A H1N1 is widely available in Saudi Arabia. However, some people are resisting vaccination. This resistance may have caused the re-emergence of influenza A H1N1 in Saudi Arabia. Public awareness should be improved to aware people of the benefits of vaccination and the consequences of not getting vaccinated.

Disclosure of interest

None declared.

Author details

¹College of Applied Medical Sciences, King Saud bin Abdulaziz University for Health Sciences, Saudi Arabia. ²Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine, King Abdulaziz Medical City, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

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¹College of Applied Medical Sciences, King Saud bin Abdulaziz University for Health Sciences, Saudi Arabia

Full list of author information is available at the end of the article