10-ID-12

Committee: Infectious Disease

Title: Public Health Reporting and National Notification for Hansen's Disease

I. Statement of the Problem

CSTE position statement 07-EC-02 recognized the need to develop an official list of nationally notifiable conditions and a standardized reporting definition for each condition on the official list. The position statement also specified that each definition had to comply with American Health Information Community recommended standards to support "automated case reporting from electronic health records or other clinical care information systems." In July 2008, CSTE identified sixty-eight conditions warranting inclusion on the official list, each of which now requires a standardized reporting definition.

II. Background and Justification

Background[1]

Hansen's disease, commonly known as leprosy, is a chronic bacterial disease of the skin caused by *Mycobacterium leprae*. Although the mode of transmission of Hansen's disease remains uncertain, most investigators think that *M. leprae* is usually spread from person to person in respiratory droplets. Close contacts are at greatest risk. Transmission of Hansen's disease in the United States is rare, but 100-200 cases are reported each year. Most U.S. cases occur in immigrants, typically from Asia and Latin America. Symptoms may be present for years prior to diagnosis, creating an opportunity for ongoing transmission. This chronic infectious disease usually affects the skin and peripheral nerves but has a wide range of possible clinical manifestations. Ongoing surveillance is needed to facilitate case detection and control efforts.

Justification

Hansen's disease meets the following criteria for a nationally and **standard** notifiable condition, as specified in CSTE position statement 08-EC-02:

- A majority of state and territorial jurisdictions—or jurisdictions comprising a majority of the U.S. population—have laws or regulations requiring **standard** reporting of Hansen's disease to public health authorities
- CDC requests **standard** notification of Hansen's disease to federal authorities
- CDC has condition-specific policies and practices concerning the agency's response to, and use of, notifications.

[1] Much of the material in the background is directly quoted from the CDC's Hansen's disease website. See the References for further information on this source.

III. Statement of the desired action(s) to be taken

CSTE requests that CDC adopt this standardized reporting definition for Hansen's disease to facilitate more timely, complete, and standardized local and national reporting of this condition.

IV. Goals of Surveillance

To provide information on the temporal, geographic, and demographic occurrence of Hansen's disease to facilitate its prevention and control

V. Methods for Surveillance: Surveillance for Hansen's Disease should use the following recommended sources of data and the extent of coverage listed in Table V.

Table V. Recommended sources of data for case identification and extent of coverage for ascertaining cases of Hansen's disease.

	Coverage	
Source of data for case ascertainment	Population-wide	Sentinel sites
clinician reporting	X	
laboratory reporting	X	
reporting by other entities (e.g., hospitals, veterinarians, pharmacies)	X	
death certificates	X	
hospital discharge or outpatient records	X	
extracts from electronic medical records	X	
telephone survey		
school-based survey		
other		

VI. Criteria for case identification

A: Narrative: A description of suggested criteria that may be for case ascertainment of a specific condition.

Report any illness to public health authorities that meet any of the following criteria:

1. All persons with skin lesions and acid-fast bacilli demonstrated in skin or dermal nerve, obtained from the full-thickness skin biopsy of a lesion should be reported. Swelling or thickening of the nerves may also be present.

2. A person whose healthcare record contains a diagnosis of Hansen's disease.

Other recommended reporting procedures

- All cases of Hansen's disease should be reported.
- Reporting should be on-going and routine.
- Frequency of reporting should follow the state health department's routine schedule.

B. Table of criteria to determine whether a case should be reported to public health authorities:

Table VI-B. Table of criteria to determine whether a case should be reported to public health authorities. Requirements for reporting are established under State and Territorial laws and/or regulations and may differ from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. These criteria are suggested as a standard approach to identifying cases of this condition for purposes of reporting, but reporting should follow State and Territorial law/regulation if any conflicts occur between these criteria and those laws/regulations.

Criterion	Reporting	
Clinical Evidence		
Hypopigmented, anesthetic macules	O	
Erythematous nodules	C	
Erythematous papules	C	
Thickening of the skin	O	
Peripheral nerve swelling	O	
Peripheral nerve thickening	O	
Medical record contains a diagnosis of Hansen's Disease		S
Laboratory Evidence		
Acid fast bacilli demonstrated in skin or a dermal nerve from a biopsy of a skin lesion	N	

Notes:
S = This criterion alone is sufficient to report a case
N = This criterion in conjunction with all other "N" and any "O" criteria in the same column is required to report a case.
O = At least one of these "O" criteria in each category in the same column (e.g., clinical presentation and laboratory findings is required to report a case.

C. Disease Specific Data Elements:

Disease-specific data elements to be included in the initial report are listed below.

Epidemiological Risk Factors

Country of birth
Prolonged residence in a developing country
Contact with a confirmed case of Hansen's disease
Armadillo contact

VII. Case Definition for Case Classification

A. Narrative description of criteria to determine how a case should be classified.

Clinical description

A chronic bacterial disease characterized by the involvement primarily of skin as well as peripheral nerves and the mucosa of the upper airway. Clinical forms of Hansen's disease represent a spectrum reflecting the cellular immune response to *Mycobacterium leprae*. The following characteristics are typical of the major forms of the disease:

- *Tuberculoid*: one or a few well-demarcated, hypopigmented, and anesthetic skin lesions, frequently with active, spreading edges and a clearing center; peripheral nerve swelling or thickening also may occur
- *Lepromatous*: a number of erythematous papules and nodules or an infiltration of the face, hands, and feet with lesions in a bilateral and symmetrical distribution that progress to thickening of the skin
- *Borderline (dimorphous)*: skin lesions characteristic of both the tuberculoid and lepromatous forms
- *Indeterminate*: early lesions, usually hypopigmented macules, without developed tuberculoid or lepromatous features

Laboratory criteria for diagnosis

- Demonstration of acid-fast bacilli in skin or dermal nerve, obtained from the full-thickness skin biopsy of a lepromatous lesion

Case classification

Confirmed: a clinically compatible case that is laboratory confirmed

B. Classification Tables

Table VII-B. Criteria for defining a case of Hansen's disease.

	Case Definition
Criterion	Confirmed
Clinical Evidence	

Hypopigmented, anesthetic macules	O
Erythematous nodules	O
Erythematous papules	O
Thickening of the skin	O
Peripheral nerve swelling	O
Peripheral nerve thickening	O
Laboratory Evidence	
Acid fast bacilli demonstrated in skin or a dermal nerve from a biopsy of a skin lesion	N

Notes:
N = This criterion in conjunction with all other "N" and any "O" criteria in the same column is required to classify a case.
O = At least one of these "O" criteria in each category in the same column (e.g., clinical presentation and laboratory findings is required to classify a case.

VIII. Period of Surveillance

Surveillance should be on-going.

IX. Data sharing/release and print criteria

- Notification to CDC of cases of confirmed Hansen's Disease is recommended.
- Electronic reports of Hansen's Disease cases in NNDSS are summarized weekly in the MMWR Tables.
- Annual case data on Hansen's Disease is also summarized in the yearly Summary of Notifiable Diseases.
- State-specific compiled data will continue to be published in the weekly reports and annual MMWR Surveillance Summaries.
- The frequency of release of additional publications of these data will be dependent on the current epidemiologic situation in the country. These publications might include annual epidemiologic summaries in the MMWR or manuscripts in peer-reviewed journals. Aggregate case data will be shared with WHO as requested.

X. References

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Case definitions for infectious conditions under public health surveillance. MMWR 1997; 46 (No. RR-10):1–57. Available from: http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/ html/00047449.htm.

2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). National notifiable diseases surveillance system: case definitions. Atlanta: CDC. Available from:

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3. Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists (CSTE). CSTE official list of nationally notifiable conditions. CSTE position statement 07-EC-02. Atlanta: CSTE; June 2007. Available from: http://www.cste.org.

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5. Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists (CSTE). Revised Case Definitions for Public Health Surveillance: Infectious Disease. 1996-18. Atlanta: CSTE; June 1996. Available from: http://www.cste.org.

6. Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists (CSTE). Data Release Guidelines of the Council of State & Territorial Epidemiologists for the National Public Health System. Atlanta: CSTE; June 1996.

7. Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. CDC-CSTE Intergovernmental Data Release Guidelines Working Group (DRGWG) Report: CDC-ATSDR Data Release Guidelines and Procedures for Re-release of State-Provided Data. Atlanta: CSTE; 2005. Available from: http://www.cste.org/pdffiles/2005/drgwgreport.pdf or http://www.cdc.gov/od/foia/policies/drgwg.pdf.

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9. Levis WR, Ernst JD. *Mycobacterium leprae* (Leprosy, Hansen's Disease). In: Mandell GL, Bennett JE, Dolin R, editors. Principles and Practice of Infectious Diseases, 6th edition. Philadelphia: Churchill Livingstone; 2005.

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