GLOBAL TASK FORCE ON CHOLERA CONTROL

Cholera surveillance for health care workers

Transcript of online course

MODULE 5

Surveillance to track clusters of cholera cases

Slide 1

Welcome to Module 5 of the GTFCC online course on cholera surveillance for health care workers.

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In this module, we will dive into how to implement surveillance to track clusters of cholera cases.

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While this module focuses on the specificities of cholera surveillance to track cholera clusters, general principles for health care workers to implement cholera surveillance addressed in Module 2 also apply - these principles always apply.
Therefore, if you have not yet already done so, we encourage you to take module 2 of this course before taking this module.

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After completing this module, you will know how to implement surveillance to track clusters including:

- How to identify patients with suspected cholera;
- Which patients with suspected cholera to test;
- And, how often to report patients with suspected cholera.

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Let's start with a refresher on cholera surveillance to track clusters.

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A cholera cluster is when a group of cases infected one another or were infected with the same source.

Clusters are more likely to occur at the very early stages following the introduction of cholera in a new geographic area.

A cluster is a type of cholera outbreak which requires strong surveillance efforts in order to guide quick and highly targeted interventions around the cases. This aims to interrupt cholera transmission before it spreads in the community and becomes more challenging to control.

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Surveillance is implemented to track cholera clusters when clustered transmission has been detected in a local geographic area.

Health authorities regularly share information and updates on the local cholera situation.

Make sure to stay up-to-date, that way at any point in time you will know the cholera situation in your local geographic area and whether you should implement cholera surveillance to track clusters.

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Surveillance to track clusters is to orient quick and highly targeted interventions around the cases to stop cholera transmission before it starts to spread in the community.

To implement cholera surveillance to track cholera clusters, identify, test, and report any patient with suspected cholera in accordance with the recommendations of this module.

This applies as long as there is clustered cholera transmission in your local geographic area. If the cholera situation changes, for example transmission is over or transmission in the community is occurring, how to implement cholera surveillance evolves. We invite you to learn more about this in Modules 3 and 4.

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Let's see how to identify patients with suspected cholera when surveillance is to track cholera clusters.

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When surveillance is implemented to track cholera clusters, a suspected cholera case is any patient who has acute watery diarrhoea (AWD) or who died from AWD.

If you are unsure about how to identify AWD, we encourage you to go back to module 2.

There are no additional criteria on age or severe dehydration to identify patients with suspected cholera among patients who have AWD.

This is to ensure a sensitive detection of suspected cholera cases and increases chances to effectively interrupt transmission by implementing interventions around the cases.

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Let's look into the strategy to test patients with suspected cholera when surveillance is to track clusters.

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When surveillance is to track clusters, all patients who meet the definition of a suspected cholera case are tested for cholera.

Testing all patients with suspected cholera is critical to understand how clustered transmission is occurring, and orient effective interventions accordingly.

If RDTs are available at your facility, use RDTs to triage samples for laboratory testing.

Test all patients who meet the definition of a suspected cholera case with a RDT.

If the RDT result is negative, cholera is ruled out.

If the RDT result is positive, send a sample to a laboratory for confirmatory testing by culture or PCR.

If RDTs are not available at your facility, collect samples from all patient who meet the definition of a suspected cholera case and sent the samples to a laboratory for confirmatory testing.

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Lastly, let's look into the reporting of patients with suspected cholera.

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If a patient who meets the definition of a suspected cholera case is seen at your facility, collect standard information on this patient and report it to your health authority within a day.

Reporting any patient with suspected cholera within a day is essential to permit timely interventions around cases. Time is key to interrupt transmission.

If you are unsure about the standard information that should be collected on patients with suspected cholera, we invite you to go back to Module 2.

If on a given week, no patient who meets the definition of a suspected cholera case was seen in your facility, report the absence of cases to your health authority at the end of the week. This is zero reporting.

To report patients with suspected cholera to your health authority, use the reporting channels and mechanisms in place at your facility. For example, there may be a reporting focal point.

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As we wrap up this module, here are the important points to remember.

In local geographic areas where there is a cluster of cholera cases, surveillance aims to guide highly targeted interventions to interrupt transmission before it spreads in the community and becomes more challenging to control.

When surveillance is implemented to track cholera clusters, all patients with acute watery diarrhoea (AWD) are suspected cholera cases.

All patients meeting the definition of a suspected cholera case are tested.

In addition, standard information is collected on all patients with suspected cholera and reported within 24 hours.

If no patient with suspected cholera was seen at a facility, this is reported weekly.

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Before moving on to the next module, we encourage you to take a short quiz. There are three questions in this quiz.

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Question 1. To track cholera clusters, a patient with suspected cholera is any patient:

a) Aged 2 years old or older with Acute Watery Diarrhoea (AWD).
b) With AWD and severe dehydration.
c) Aged 2 years old or older with AWD and severe dehydration.
d) With AWD.

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The correct answer is d. When surveillance is to track cholera clusters, any patient with AWD is a suspected cholera case.

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Question 2. Select all that apply. To track cholera clusters:

a) Any patient with suspected cholera is reported daily.
b) Any patient with suspected cholera is reported weekly.
c) The absence of patient with suspected cholera is reported daily.
d) The absence of patient with suspected cholera is reported weekly.

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The correct answers are a and d. When surveillance is to track cholera clusters any patient meeting the definition of a suspected cholera case is reported daily and the absence of patients meeting the definition of a suspected cholera case is reported weekly.

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Question 3. This is the last question. To track cholera clusters, any patient with AWD is tested for cholera. Is this a) true or b) false?

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The correct answer is a. This is true. When surveillance is to track cholera clusters, any patient with AWD is tested for cholera. This is because any patient with AWD is a suspected cholera case, and all suspected cholera cases should be tested to track clusters effectively.

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We have now completed this module.