
IMPROVING REPORTING RATES OF HOSPITALIZED PNEUMONIA CASES IN VANUATU: AN EVALUATION STUDY

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INTRODUCTION

- The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the need for surveillance of pneumonia and severe acute respiratory illness (SARI)
- This did not exist in Vanuatu in early 2020
- We established enhanced surveillance of pneumonia and SARI in 2020
- The objective is to:
 - ✓ Rapidly identify people hospitalized that meet the case definition for COVID-19 to prompt testing and response
- Between April to December, reporting issues were observed
- We conducted a study to see if training for surveillance reporting improved the number of reports received



METHODS: ESTABLISHMENT OF PNEUMONIA SURVEILLANCE

- Pneumonia surveillance commenced April 2020
- Covers all 6 hospitals of Vanuatu (referral and provincial)
- Utilization of key provincial surveillance officers
- Weekly reporting (Forms, reporting process): The national surveillance officer proactively telephones and emails focal points weekly to prompt electronic reporting of the number of people hospitalized with pneumonia or SARI



PNEUMONIA / SARI DATA COLLECTION FORMS

Provincial Hospital Data Collection Form



Provincial Weekly Hospital Surveillance Report Template - Pneumonia / SARI

Ward: _____		Hospital: _____		
Total Admissions: _____		Week Number: _____		
Date	# New pneumonia admission	Age	# New SARI Admission	Age

Note: SARI is Severe Acute Respiratory Tract Infection. The Case definition for SARI is: A patient with acute respiratory infection with history of fever or measured fever of 38 degree Celsius and above and cough; with onset within the last 10 days; and who requires hospitalization.

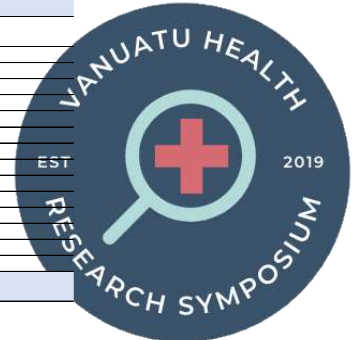
Vila Central Hospital Data Collection Form

Hospital Surveillance – Pneumonia/SARI/ILI data collection form

Facility	Vila Central Hospital	Ward/Unit	
Total Ward admission / Presentations			
EPI Week NO.		Week ending date	

Pneumonia				
Date	Age	Swabbed for COVID		Remarks
		Yes	No	

SARI (Severe Acute Respiratory Tract Infection)				
Date	Age	Swabbed for COVID		Remarks
		Yes	No	



REPORTING PROCESS

Table 1
Deadlines for Pneumonia /SARI reports of the six hospitals

Facility	Weekly
Lenakel Hospital	Monday of the following week
Vila Central Hospital	Monday of the following week
Lolowai Hospital	Monday of the following week
Norsup Hospital	Monday of the following week
Northern Provincial Hospital	Monday of the following week
Quatvaes	Monday of the following week

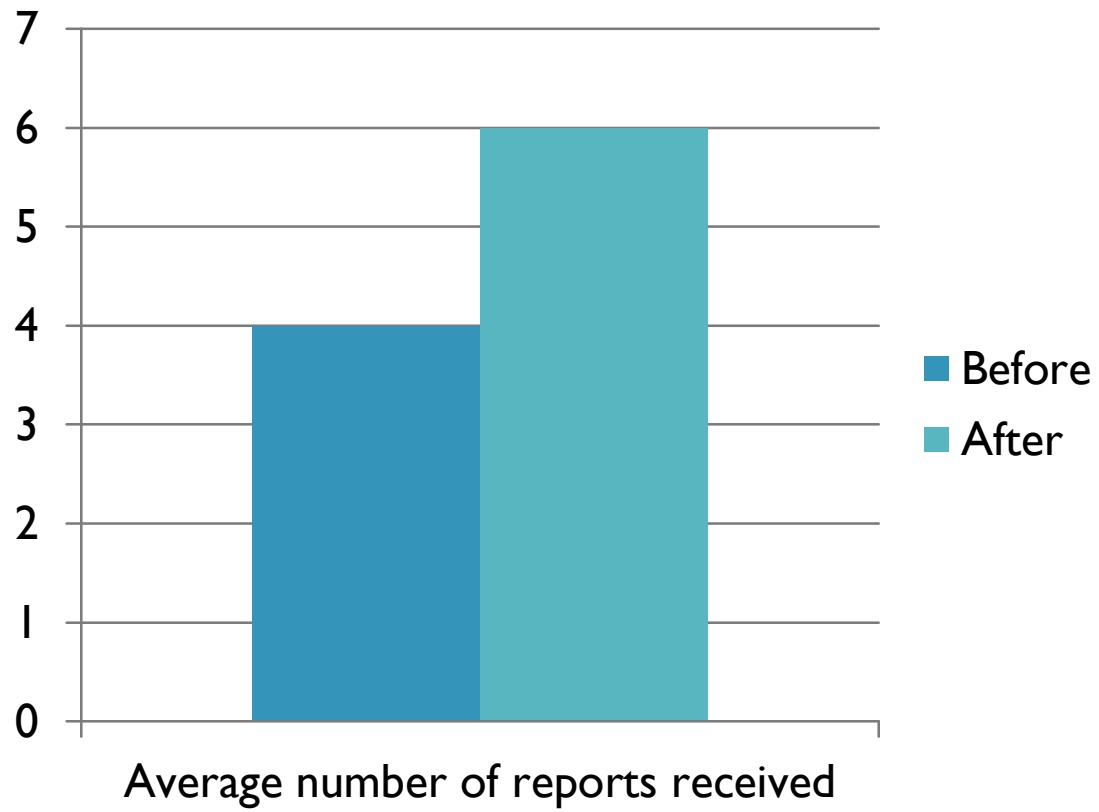


METHODS: EVALUATION

- In May 2021, one week training program was conducted
- 41 participants from all the provinces (Surveillances officers, HIS officers, Laboratory officers and public health managers) attended
- Post training evaluation



RESULTS



- Improvements also in:
 - Reporting timeliness
 - Completeness
 - Accuracy



DISCUSSION

- Other contributing factors affecting reporting rates are:
 - ✓ Communication challenges e.g. Ongoing internet access or Telecommunication challenges
 - ✓ Surveillance officer engagement with other roles
 - ✓ Lack of supportive mechanisms in terms of resource to support surveillance



RECOMMENDATIONS / IMPLICATIONS

- The surveillance of hospitalized pneumonia is very important to help hospitals in Vanuatu identify COVID-19 cases in the presence of a community outbreak.
- Hospital managements should contribute to support strengthen disease surveillance systems through the following:
 - ✓ Scale up electronic data collection systems to improve timeliness and efficiency
 - ✓ Reporting exchange barriers must not be overlooked to avoid reporting lag
 - ✓ Supportive supervision
- A Study to describe the development of the pneumonia surveillance system in the context of COVID-19 in the future may reinforce strengthening of other disease surveillance.



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