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Japanese encephalitis on the Australian mainland

Japanese encephalitis was diagnosed in an adult male in Queensland in March 1998. Several sentinel pigs were also found to have been infected. The man who recovered and was discharged from hospital is believed to have acquired the virus while working on a boat on the west coast of Cape York Peninsula. This is the first case of Japanese encephalitis to be diagnosed on the Australian mainland. In 1995 three cases, including two deaths, were reported in the outer Torres Strait islands. A further case was reported in the Torres Strait in March 1998.

Following the detection of the disease on the mainland, blood samples were taken from over 450 people in two Cape York communities. Test results from these two

communities showed no evidence of Japanese encephalitis infection and health authorities have ruled out the need for vaccination at this stage.

Queensland Tropical Public Health Unit and Queensland Department of Primary Industries will continue to monitor the human and animal populations to determine the extent of Japanese encephalitis activity in the area. Relevant State and Commonwealth human and animal health authorities are continuing to work together to co-ordinate this process and develop appropriate response strategies for the next wet season (November-April). The possibility of a future vaccination program cannot be ruled out.

Haemolytic Uraemic Syndrome in South Australia

The South Australian Health Commission is investigating possible links between three cases of Haemolytic Uraemic Syndrome (HUS) which were recently notified this month. The cases, all children, are recovering in hospital. Further

investigations are underway. South Australian health authorities will continue to monitor the situation and will inform the public of any further developments.

Notice to readers

CDI Internet address

The *Communicable Diseases Intelligence* homepage is now located at:

<http://www.health.gov.au/pubhlth/cdi/cdihtml.htm>

Information from two additional surveillance schemes is now available on our web-site. These are National Influenza Surveillance and the *CDI* Virology and Serology Reporting Scheme (LabVISE).