

PRESS RELEASE ON THE BAYELSA STATE RESPONSE AND THE FOUR NEW  
CONFIRMED CASES OF COVID -19 ( 22-24<sup>th</sup> May 2020)

May 25, 2020

Distinguished Gentlemen,

In the past three days, we have recorded four new confirmed cases of COVID -19 in the State. The NCDC announced one of these cases on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of May and three just yesterday. This brings the total number of confirmed cases in the State to eleven.

The case announced on the 22<sup>nd</sup> is a single lady in her late thirties. She is a businesswoman and lives within the Yenagoa metropolis. She called our emergency lines with complaints of fever, cough and malaise and requested for a COVID -19 test. The State Rapid Response team investigated her case and collected samples for testing even though she did not admit to any travel history. She is not epidemiologically linked to any previous confirmed case in the State

She has since been evacuated for further treatment at one of our Isolation Centre. She is currently clinically stable and receiving optimal medical care.

The 3 new cases announced yesterday are a cohort. They were referred to us by a medical doctor. Their cases were investigated, and samples collected. They are also not epidemiologically linked to any of our previously confirmed cases but admitted to recent travel histories to Lagos and Delta States. Two of them are military men while the third is a household contact to one of the two. They are all males.

They have been evacuated to one of our Isolation Centre. They are all clinically stable and receiving optimal medical care.

All contacts to these 4 new confirmed cases are being line listed and adequately followed up including necessary environmental decontamination. Samples have and are still being collected from their high -risk contacts while they have all been counselled on self-quarantine. Risk communication and community engagement are ongoing.

We are happy to announce that within this period, case 6 (Abuja Retiree) was discharged from the NDUTH Isolation Centre after meeting the clinical criteria for discharge and a negative repeat COVID -19 test result.

The health care professional (Case 7) is stable and responding to treatment.

The State Government Quarantine Facility has since being admitting contacts who are unable to self-quarantine. They have been very cooperative while enjoying the luxury provided at this centre.

The State Public Emergency Operations Centre (the COVID -19 Situation Room/ War Room of the State response) and the State COVID -19 Task Force are and will remain on REPONSE mode; doing their best to contain and mitigate the impact of this pandemic.

Our surveillance is gathering momentum by the day and we are testing more cases daily. We now use the UPTH Port Harcourt Reference COVID -19 Laboratory. In the past weeks, we have been sending an average of 25 samples daily to this facility. Most of these samples are contacts of confirmed cases.

Let me seize this opportunity congratulate His Excellency, Senator Douye Diri, Governor of Bayelsa State for a successful 100 days in Office particularly for his exemplary commitment to fighting the outbreak of this pandemic in the State.

I also want to express my sincere appreciation to all the health care workers particularly the frontlines who have been tireless in their resolve and commitment to the COVID -19 response in the State.

There is need to re-emphasize that public vigilance is important while asking that patients should confide in their physicians the true case history of their ill health. We have also commenced active health facility case search for any case of Severe Acute Respiratory Infection (SARI) in our hospitals in order to have a sentinel insight into the importation and possible community transmission of COVID -19.

Let me reiterate that we still believe in the opportunities and the gains of prevention and early detection while building our capacity to manage COVID-19 seamlessly.

To this end we join the rest of the global community to advise as follows:

1. Regular and thorough hand washing with soap and water; the use of alcohol-based hand sanitizer is also recommended.
2. Social distancing is key. Maintain at least 2 meters (6 feet) distance between you and anyone. Avoid crowds and follow the stay-at-home advisory.
3. Endeavour to practice good respiratory hygiene: when sneezing or coughing, cover your mouth and nose with your sleeve at the flexed elbow or with a tissue. Then dispose-off the used tissue safely, immediately.
4. Exposed persons should stay home if you feel unwell with symptoms like fever, cough and difficulty in breathing and notify relevant authorities immediately.
5. DO NOT SPREAD FAKE NEWS. Citizens are advised not to abuse social media and indulge in spreading misinformation that can cause panic and lead to a stampede

All health facilities should ensure strict and appropriate IPC at all triage points. The Bayelsa State Public Health Emergency Operations centre will continue to provide updates and guidance while implementing all necessary measures to ensure public health and safety.

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