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Ministry of Health

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திகதி) 5 / 10 / 2023
Date)

General Circular No: 01 - 33 / 2023

Deputy Director General NHSL/TH Kandy
All Provincial Directors of Health Services
All Regional Directors of Health Services
All Directors of Teaching hospitals/Provincial General Hospitals/District General Hospitals
All Medical Superintendents of Base Hospitals
All hospital directors of Tri- forces and Police
All Directors of Private hospitals
All heads of institutions

Improving Malaria Patient Identification and Reporting in Private Healthcare

This circular is to address a matter of critical importance to our healthcare system, particularly considering our country's remarkable achievement in eliminating malaria as certified by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2016. Sri Lanka is currently in the prevention of re-establishment (PoR) phase, which necessitates our utmost vigilance in monitoring and responding to imported malaria cases.

Delaying the diagnosis and treatment of imported cases can exacerbate the risk of onward transmission and the re-establishment of malaria in Sri Lanka, especially given the presence of Anopheles vectors in our country. A delay in diagnosis too can result in severe malaria and death. Therefore, I would like to bring to your attention a pressing concern related to the identification and reporting of malaria cases in private healthcare settings.

In several instances, patients with malaria have been identified through private laboratories during routine Full Blood Count (FBC) tests. While we deeply appreciate the invaluable work of these private laboratories in contributing to our healthcare system, we have encountered certain difficulties in identifying and locating these affected individuals. This is primarily due to incomplete patient information and a lack of established communication channels with the patients by whom the tests were ordered.

In this regard, I would like to emphasize some fundamental principles that must be rigorously followed within all private practices and private hospitals regarding the record-keeping of patients whose blood samples are sent for investigations. To ensure swift identification and response, the following information should be recorded:

Patient Information:

1. Name (at least first name and surname)
2. Age and gender
3. Contact numbers (mobile and landline both, if available)
4. NIC number and/or passport number (for non-Sri Lankan patients record the passport number)

Additionally, if logistical factors are available recording the patient's residential address and/or workplace address also will be promoted. This information will be invaluable in locating the patients. Furthermore, it is important to immediately notify the Anti Malaria Campaign (AMC) Headquarters via the hotlines (0117 626 626 / 071 284 1767) for any patient suspected of having malaria. Early reporting is vital in facilitating rapid treatment and prevention of deaths and in preventing the re-establishment of this disease in Sri Lanka.

You are hereby directed to promptly distribute the enclosed information to all healthcare practitioners and institutions operating within the private healthcare sector, including those managing individual private dispensaries during non-working hours.



Dr. Asela Gunawardane
Director General of Health Services

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Deputy Director General / MS II
Director / Medical Supplies Division
Director of Private Health Sector Development (To inform all private hospitals)
Provincial /District Consultant Community Physicians
Regional Medical Officers (Malaria),