

MEDIA STATEMENT

Date of Issue: 30 August 2021

COVID-19 CLUSTER IN TWO ADJOINING WARDS IN IMH; OPERATIONS IN OTHER PARTS OF THE HOSPITAL REMAIN UNAFFECTED

1. A COVID-19 cluster in two adjoining wards has emerged in the Institute of Mental Health (IMH). This cluster comprises six cases – two staff (a staff nurse and a health attendant) and four patients.
2. The first case, a staff nurse who works in both wards, was confirmed on Saturday, 28 August. The rest of the five cases were detected through surveillance screening on 28 and 29 August. Both staff and one of the four patients are fully vaccinated while the remaining three patients are not vaccinated.
3. The two affected wards have been buttoned up, with visits, admissions and discharges suspended until further notice. Surveillance screening of all staff and patients on the two wards is ongoing.
4. As a precautionary measure, IMH has also started conducting a one-off surveillance testing on all its staff, to be completed by Friday, 3 September. It will also progressively test all inpatients.
5. As the cluster is confined to the two affected wards so far, operations in other parts of the hospital remain unaffected.
6. Since the start of the COVID-19 outbreak in Singapore, IMH has stepped up surveillance and infection control measures for visitors, patients, and staff. Measures for staff include wearing the appropriate Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) at work and split team or modular work arrangements where feasible. Staff are regularly reminded not to come to work if they are unwell and to seek medical advice promptly. They also practice safe distancing and strict hand hygiene. Patient-facing staff also undergo Rostered Routine Testing (RRT).
7. Inpatients' temperatures are monitored twice a day and nurses look out for signs of any illness, particularly typical Covid-19 symptoms. IMH also provides patient education to help patients understand the COVID-19 situation and the importance of personal hygiene and infection control.

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