Insidious reintroduction of wild poliovirus into Israel, 2013/4

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Since 1988, there have been no poliomyelitis cases in Israel

NO cases of poliomyelitis during current event
Routine IPV-only vaccination coverage (pre-event)

- Israel ~ 95%
- Southern District ~ 92%
- Arabs ~ 97%
- Bedouins in Southern district ~ 90%

- Sero-prevalence study: 98.2% positive
Supplementary Environmental Surveillance

• Routine monthly surveillance
  – 8-10 sites since 1989
  – 30% – 40% of entire population
  – Measure viral loads

Currently: Intensified to >20 sites, >80% population
WPV1 Re-introduction in Israel
May 28, 2013

• non-Sabin type 1 poliovirus, identified by environmental surveillance in:
  • Two sewage treatment facilities in Southern Israel
  • Closest match to WPV1 SOAS from Pakistan 2012 and Egypt (Dec 2012)
WPV circulation in Israel – current status

- Polio transmission was intense and prolonged only in 6 sites in part of the South of Israel
- November 2013:
  - Steep decreases in transmission by environmental surveillance
  - Traces of the virus by very sensitive molecular tests
- Beginning of March 2014: complete disappearance of any trace of the virus from the sewage from all sites, but one
- End of March 2014: the last site has become negative
WPV1 in Sewage – Southern Israel

- All sites, but one, negative since mid-Feb 2014
- All sites are negative in last two samples
Intensified Surveillance

• AFP surveillance
  – extended to all age groups
  – > 1/100,000 expected
  – 100% surveillance index in 2014
• Aseptic Meningitis surveillance (2013)
• Stool Surveys – ongoing
• Enhanced Environmental Surveillance - ongoing
Since November 2013:

- 1,000 sampled individuals
- only 1 borderline positive (0.1%)
  (in February 2014)
Public Health Response
Polio Vaccinations

- Jun-Jul 2013: Nationwide IPV catch-up (>98% coverage) + local booster IPV (all ages)
- Aug-Sep 2013: national bOPV SIA (ages 0-10) – Round 1
- Oct 2013: bOPV SIA – (ages 0-10) Round 2 in areas with persistently positive sewage samples (South district)
- Jan 2014: bOPV included in routine vaccination schedule (2 doses at the ages of 6 and 18 months) as part of the continuing emergency response
Israeli President, Mr. Shimon Peres - committed to OPV vaccination campaign
Launching OPV campaign in a press conference headed by the Minister of Health
Minister of Health and DG meeting with community leaders
Protest demonstration against OPV campaign
Action plan in response to renewed transmission

- Routine intensified environmental surveillance, covering all the regions of the country and most of the Israeli population
- Quality control: identification of Sabine 1 and 3 in sewage
- Contingency plan: immediate SIA with bOPV
In conclusion:

- Environmental/laboratory-sensitive outbreak that lasted 10 months
- Full transparency with WHO, the health sector and the public
- Pro-active consensus creation on the PH measures among the health sector
- Highest level of political commitment
- Intensified monitoring and tailored response
- Return back to the IPV+OPV program
- A new chapter in the epidemiology of polio?