



**GOVERNMENT OF SIERRA LEONE
NATIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCY
(NPHA)**

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For Immediate Release

PUBLIC NOTICE ON HANTAVIRUS AWARENESS AND PREPAREDNESS

The Ministry of Health (MoH) and the National Public Health Agency (NPHA) wish to inform the public that health authorities are closely monitoring recent reports of Hantavirus infections linked to a cruise ship outbreak reported internationally. Current information indicates that the risk to the ECOWAS region, including Sierra Leone, remains **LOW**.

Hantavirus is a rare viral disease mainly spread through contact with infected rodents such as rats and mice, especially through exposure to their urine, droppings, or saliva in dusty or poorly ventilated environments. In rare cases, limited person-to-person transmission has been reported with the Andes strain of the virus.

Symptoms of Hantavirus may include but not limited to: fever, headache, fatigue, muscle pain, vomiting or abdominal pain **and** difficulty breathing in severe cases

The MOH and NPHA assure the public that:

- There are currently **no confirmed cases of Hantavirus in Sierra Leone**.
- Surveillance at points of entry and health facilities has been strengthened for early detection and response
- Collaboration with regional and international partners continues to ensure timely information sharing and preparedness.
- We shall initiate Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) interventions to ensure our communities remain informed, aware, and engaged.

The Public is advised to:

- Keep homes and surroundings clean, store food safely, and dispose of waste properly to prevent rodent infestation.
- Wear protective gear when cleaning rodent-infested areas and call 117 or seek medical attention if flu-like symptoms develop after rodent exposure or recent travel.

The public is encouraged to remain calm, avoid spreading misinformation, and follow updates from official Government channels.

Signed:

Brig. Gen. Prof. Foday Sahr

Executive Director

National Public Health Agency

