

HOSPITAL-BASED SURVEILLANCE OF JAPANESE ENCEPHALITIS AT A TERTIARY HOSPITAL IN MANILA

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Abstract. Japanese encephalitis virus (JEV) is endemic in the Philippines but the incidence and burden of disease are not well established. We conducted a prospective hospital-based study at San Lazaro Hospital, a tertiary level hospital in Manila, from September 2005 to December 2006. Cases were determined using an in-house dengue and Japanese encephalitis (JE) enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay in order to detect the proportion of JE cases among the acute encephalitis syndrome (AES) cases admitted to our hospital. Fifteen patients were found to have AES, of whom 6 (40%) had confirmed JE. Of the JE cases, 4 were females and 2 were males with an age range of 3-14 years. Three of the 6 JE cases occurred during July. The most common signs and symptoms on admission among JE cases were: fever, headache, loss of appetite, neck rigidity and altered sensorium. JE likely comprises a significant proportion of hospitalized AES cases among children from Manila and nearby provinces. Further studies on the nation-wide prevalence and distribution of JE in the Philippines are needed to guide health authorities in disease control and prevention strategies.

Keywords: Japanese encephalitis, hospital-based study, Philippines

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