



Emerging and Reemerging Infectious Diseases, Region of the Americas

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Pneumonia in El Salvador

Yesterday the Ministry of Health of El Salvador, in light of the rising number of pneumonia cases in the country, declared a *Red Alert* for an imminent epidemic. Between Epidemiological Weeks (EW) 25 (ending on 21 June) and 29 (ending on 19 July), a total of 14,082 cases of pneumonia have been reported. This number of cases represents 79% more than what was registered for the same period in 2002. The most affected age group is that of children under five (at a rate of 8,000 per 100,000 inhabitants). This case increase is distributed throughout the entire country: 3,668 cases in the western area of the country, 1,421 cases in the central area; 3,395 cases in the metropolitan area, 2,939 cases in the paracentral area, and 2,659 cases in the eastern area. Between January 2003 and July 23, a total of 288 deaths have been reported. The interventions implemented by the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare are aimed at strengthening hospital care. (*Source*: PAHO/WHO Representative Office in El Salvador.)