



**3 AUGUST 2016**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **PARTIAL LIFTING OF ISOLATION ORDER ON SUNNY HEIGHTS DAY CARE CENTRE**

The Agri-Food & Veterinary Authority (AVA) has partially lifted the isolation order imposed on Sunny Heights Day Care Centre (SHDCC) with effect from 3 August 2016. This will allow SHDCC to accept new dogs, while ensuring that new incoming dogs will not come into contact with current resident dogs.

#### Background

2 On 13 July 2016, AVA had issued an isolation order to SHDCC due to an increase in the number of suspected leptospirosis cases linked to the centre. The isolation order prohibits any dog from entering or leaving the premises without AVA's authorisation.

3 Since then, AVA has worked closely with SHDCC to ensure that existing resident and boarding dogs on the premises are adequately isolated in a designated area. Other biosecurity measures were also put in place. These include providing dedicated equipment for resident and boarding dogs, and having additional barricades to ensure that these dogs will not come into contact with other animals. In addition, SHDCC has completed a thorough cleaning and disinfection of the premises, including its swimming pool. Moving forward, SHDCC will also be improving their pest control and sanitation programme to further reduce the risk of disease transmission by rodents, as well as cleaning and disinfecting their premises on a daily basis.

#### Partial Lifting of Isolation Order

4 AVA has assessed the biosecurity measures that SHDCC has undertaken to be adequate, as the newly accepted dogs would be segregated from resident dogs by having

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clearly demarcated areas. Hence, the isolation order for SHDCC has been partially lifted, which would allow SHDCC to accept new dogs to be kept at designated areas.

5 Environmental samples taken by AVA have tested negative for pathogenic species of leptospires. AVA had also conducted clinical assessments and taken samples from the resident and boarding dogs kept on the premises for testing. Test results are pending. AVA will continue to monitor the situation at SHDCC before deciding on a complete lifting of the isolation order.

#### Update on Number of Leptospirosis Cases

6 Between 1 January to 1 August 2016, AVA received 27 notifications of suspected canine leptospirosis cases, of which 15 are associated with SHDCC. Till date, 15 dogs have died or had to be euthanized islandwide, of which 6 had previously visited SHDCC.

#### About Leptospirosis

7 Leptospirosis is a bacterial disease that can affect both animals and humans. It can be transmitted to humans and animals through cuts and abrasions of the skin, or through mucous membranes with water contaminated with the urine of infected animals. While many wild and domestic animals can be infected and act as a source of infection, rodents are considered the primary source of infection to human beings. The bacteria can remain in the soil or stagnant water for months hence it will not be possible to completely eliminate the risk of transmission from the environment.

#### Diagnosing Leptospirosis

8 The methods used to diagnose leptospirosis in animals include assessing for clinical signs, testing for the presence of the bacteria in blood and urine, and testing for antibodies in the blood.

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9 The diagnosis of leptospirosis can be challenging, as infected dogs may not exhibit any clinical signs. Test results must be evaluated together with the animal's vaccination status and medical history.

10 Clinical signs of leptospirosis in dogs include fever, vomiting, diarrhoea, jaundice and failure to produce urine. Infected dogs may be treated with antibiotics but may succumb to the infection due to acute renal failure. Dogs showing these clinical signs and are known to have been exposed to infected animals should seek veterinary treatment immediately.

11 Clinical signs of leptospirosis in humans include fever, headache, decreased appetite, chills, muscle aches, vomiting, jaundice, red eyes, abdominal pain, diarrhoea and rash. Without treatment, leptospirosis may be fatal.

#### Protection against Leptospirosis

12 Dog owners are reminded to keep their dogs up to date with their vaccinations. Although the vaccine does not provide 100% protection, it can reduce the chance of the dog being infected and help prevent the excretion of bacteria in the dog's urine. Dog owners are also advised to reduce their dogs' exposure to water or soil that may be contaminated, such as areas that are home to small mammals like bats, rats and other rodents, which are all potential carriers of *Leptospira*.

13 The public are advised to seek medical attention should they develop symptoms. They should also practice good personal hygiene at all times, especially after the handling of animals, or if they are in contact with soil or water that may be contaminated by animal urine. For more information on Leptospirosis, please refer to Annex A and the following link: <https://www.facebook.com/avasg/videos/1040464842696709/>.

**ISSUED BY AGRI-FOOD & VETERINARY AUTHORITY OF SINGAPORE  
3 AUGUST 2016**

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# *Leptospirosis*

Leptospirosis is a bacterial disease caused by *Leptospira* spp. and can cause disease in both animals and humans.

## Disease Overview



- ◆ Rodents are known to be carriers of leptospirosis.



- ◆ The bacteria that causes the disease is excreted in the urine of infected animals, which may be washed into the soil or stagnant water. There, it can survive for months.

- ◆ Signs of infection may appear anytime from a few days to 1 month after infection.



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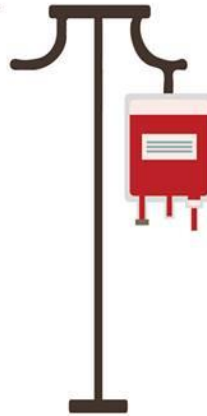
# Leptospirosis

## Transmission Mode

- ◆ Infection occurs when bacteria enters through the skin, especially if there are cuts, or via mucous membranes such as the eyes, nose or mouth. This includes open wounds and ingestion of contaminated water or food.

## Clinical Signs

- ◆ Fever
- ◆ Vomiting
- ◆ Diarrhoea
- ◆ Jaundice (Yellow skin and gums)
- ◆ Failure to produce urine
- ◆ Acute renal failure may lead to death
- ◆ Infected animals may not show all of these signs



If you are worried your pet might be infected with leptospirosis, do consult your vet immediately!

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# Leptospirosis

## Prevention

- ◆ Vaccination reduces the chances of your dog being infected with leptospirosis.
- ◆ Be sure to keep up to date with vaccine boosters.
- ◆ Restrict your pet's access to areas which may be contaminated, such as stagnant ponds, or trash cans with known rodent activity.
- ◆ Do not let your pet interact with another pet that is suspected to be suffering from leptospirosis.



Leptospirosis can affect humans too!



## ◆ Always practice good personal hygiene



- ★ Wash your hands after handling animals.
- ★ Wear gloves when cleaning the toilet of an animal suspected or confirmed to be infected.

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# *Leptospirosis*

## **Treatment**

- ◆ Leptospirosis is treatable with antibiotics.
- ◆ Early treatment increases the chances of recovery and reduces complications.



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