March 3, 2009

ATTN: Medical Health Officers and Branch Offices
   Directors of Health Protection
   Public Health Nursing Administrators and Assistant Administrators
   Holders of Communicable Disease Control Manuals

Re: Revisions to Communicable Disease Control Manual:
   Chapter I – Management of Specific Diseases, Rabies

Please note the following revisions to the above guidelines:

Page 1, Section 2.0 “Clinical Description”
- Changed order of Clinical Description; added Infectious Agent and Reservoirs of Infection to follow a more logical flow.
- Added language on airborne transmission since there is some uncertainty around its role.
- Added Reservoirs.

Page 2, Section 3.0 “Definitions”
- Added definitions for contact and unusual behaviour; added language to the information on rabies vaccine.

Page 4, Section 4.0 “Guidelines for Rabies Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (RPEP)”, Algorithm
- Added direction at bottom to contact CFIA for testing.

Page 5, Subsection 4.1 “Was the person exposed to a bat, or bitten or licked by another possibly rabid animal?”

- Updated statistics on positive bats.
- Introduced new policy doing away with RPEP for bat-in-bedroom and bat nearby exposures; only evidence, observation or report of physical contact will be considered for RPEP. The rationale is that evidence does not support RPEP for non-contact exposure, and that the likelihood of an unknown bite from a bat is very low.
- Language added indicating bats in these exposures will not be tested, since RPEP is not a consideration, unless there is physical contact.
- Added MSDS information on rabies virus.
- Paragraph on rodents (new page 7) moved down.

Administrative Circular 2009:06
Language on aerosol transmission has been amended and response clarified further.
Added language to more clearly define response to someone exposed to an animal that has been exposed to a bat or suspected rabid animal (new page 7).

Page 8, Subsection 4.2 “Have first aid and wound care been performed?”
First aid language has been added – clarifying flushing of wound and suggesting disinfectants as an option.

Page 8, Subsection 4.3 “Did the exposure occur in BC?”
Last paragraph removed

Page 9, Subsection 4.3.1 “RPEP started in other countries”
New section 4.3.1 “RPEP started in other countries” added, with more detailed language on RPEP given or started in other countries added.

Page 10, Subsection 4.5 “Testing suspect animals”
Added wording to indicate testing at the discretion of the CFIA DV.
Section removed, added language to state that testing of animals must not be done unless RPEP will be undertaken in the event of a positive.
Added language to describe specimens and condition of the specimens.
Wording of last paragraph changed slightly from EHOs “must be requested to prepare and ship specimens” to EHOs “must prepare and ship specimens”.

Page 11, Subsection 4.7 “Can the dog, cat, or ferret be observed for 10 days to check for signs of rabies?”
Language on animal exposures expanded to cover exposures in BC, the developed world and enzootic areas. Minimal risk assessment can be considered for domestic animals in BC.

Page 13, Subsection 4.8 “Did the animal exhibit signs compatible with rabies?”
Link to the online Merck Veterinary Manual added to assess neurological behaviour.

Page 15, Section 5.0 “Epidemiological/Historical Information”
Language added to clarify previous non-bat positives in BC.

Page 15, Section 6.0 “Release of Biologicals for Rabies Post-Exposure Prophylaxis”
New link for BC Health File.
Page 16, Section 7.0 “Recording”
- Direction given to add immunizations to iPHIS PHS module, Imms/TST tab and not the Rabies module, Imms tab.
- Other language added to clarify recording.

Page 17, Section 8.0 “Reporting”
- Removed the word “domestic”, to correct the statement rabies in all animals is reportable.

Page 17, Section 9.0 “Detention, Observation, and Testing of Animals suspected of being rabid or having physical contact with a bat.”
- Section rewritten.

Page 18, Section 10.0 “Simian B Virus”
- Website added for identification of macaque monkeys.

Page 20, Section 13.0 “References”
- References updated.

Page 22, Appendix A: Canadian Food Inspection Agency – Animal Health Programs
- CFIA contacts updated.

Page 23, Appendix B: Rabies Exposure Report and Rabies Biologicals Request Form
- Rabies Exposure Report and Rabies Biologicals Request Form updated to reflect changes in iPHIS Data Standards; mandatory fields underlined.

Please remove and destroy the following from the Communicable Disease Control Manual, Chapter 1 – Management of Specific Diseases, Rabies

Table of Contents

Pages 1 to 21 October 2007

Please insert the following in the Communicable Disease Control Manual, Chapter 1- Management of Specific Diseases, Rabies

Table of Contents

Pages 1 to 28 February 2009
If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Dr. Eleni Galanis, Physician Epidemiologist (604-660-5401; eleni.galanis@bccdc.ca) or Ken Cooper, Senior Environmental Health Specialist (250-768-3949; ken.cooper@bccdc.ca).

Sincerely,

[Signature]

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