

Neisseria Meningitidis Serotype W135

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Sir,

A number of cases of meningococcal disease has been reported in France, Netherlands, Oman and Saudi Arabia early this year. These has been associated with pilgrims who have travelled to Mecca as well as close contacts of pilgrims returning from the Haji.

A total of 4 cases has been diagnosed clinically as meningococcal infections in the month of April and May in Hospital Kuala Lumpur. One of the cases had just returned from Saudi Arabia after the Haji, whereas the other 3 cases were close contacts of the pilgrims. Microbiological investigations have revealed *Neisseria meningitidis* serogroups W135 isolated from one of the

cases. This serotype is not covered by the bivalent meningococcal vaccine currently available in this country. We should perhaps consider using the polyvalent meningococcal vaccine for our pilgrims travelling to Saudi Arabia in the future. The health authorities has been monitoring the situation and contact tracing and chemoprophylaxis has been undertaken.

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