

Registration during major outbreaks of infectious diseases

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Introduction

During an outbreak of Avian Influenza (AI) in the Netherlands in 2003, the registration and monitoring system of local Outbreak Control Authorities appeared to be inadequate. In the evaluation of this outbreak the Dutch Inspectorate (IGZ) noted that the current systems contained insufficient information on patient's level as well as information on progress of the outbreak. Therefore, it was the aim of this project to develop a digital system for registration and monitoring patient and contact information during large outbreaks of infectious diseases

Methods

The development of the registration system was based on the recommendations from the evaluation report on the 2003 outbreak of AI and the demands from the Inspectorate. For the development of the system a Working Group was installed, with representatives of the following organisations involved in AI outbreak control: Local health authorities, RIVM/Cib and LNV. Through discussion meetings consensus was reached on the data set to be entered in the system. A preliminary version of the registration system was tested during a multidisciplinary exercise. Currently the registration system is under construction by the RIVM/Cib.

Results

A web-based registration system on patient information during infectious diseases outbreaks has been developed. It contains 5 steps

- Selection of user and personal data client
- Poultry farm data
- Medical history and provide medication
- Medication certificate
- Anamnesis by complaints

The system is of use for multiple parties, being: Local health authorities, the agriculture department and the RIVM/Cib. Although the system is especially developed for AI outbreaks, it can be used for other mayor outbreaks with minor changes.

In the future this registration system will be part of the "Pandora" datawarehouse. Pandora will link 5 different registration systems, used by different organizations controlling an AI outbreak. It will include epidemiological data (OSIRIS), laboratory data (Unilab), data from veterinary department and data from the case control study.

Lessons

- Be sure to involve all the stakeholder from the beginning of a project.
- Stimulate exercises on outbreaks with testing of the registration system



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