

**Technical Guidance Document
on therapeutic and preventive measures to be considered
for Avian Influenza in humans**

Update: 09/03/2004

Avian influenza currently affects poultry in a number of Asian countries. Outbreaks are characterised by high mortality and morbidity in poultry. Despite large scale culling of affected birds, the virus continues to circulate and new outbreaks are still being reported. The epidemic is unprecedented in scale.

Human cases caused by influenza A H5N1 strains have been reported from Vietnam and Thailand. The number of new cases continues to increase and new cases are being reported each week. The case fatality rate is high without evidence of human to human transmission.

In view of possible outbreaks of avian influenza in poultry in the Community, Member States may consider to take the following measures:

- Identify high risk groups, such as staff involved in the culling of poultry, farmers, staff working at slaughterhouses, to receive particular protection.
- Take stocks of protective personal equipment (PPE) including appropriate masks, including the preparation of guidelines for personal hygiene, disinfections and proper use of PPE.
- Prepare for vaccination of identified risk groups with influenza epidemic vaccines currently available with a view to utilising any potential for cross protection (N1 component) and to minimising the risk of re-assortment of human and avian adapted strains in co-infected humans. This should include an estimate of the number of doses required and sharing this information with the Community network.
- Prepare for use of suitable antivirals for prophylactic / therapeutic purposes in identified risk groups including agreed criteria for preferential use. This should include an estimate of the number of doses required and sharing this information with the Community network.

Further protective measures should be envisaged should high pathogenic avian influenza strains in humans or human to human transmission be confirmed in the Community.