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PRESS RELEASE
Monkeypox (MPOX) Alert

16 AOUT 2024

The Minister of Public Health, Dr. MANAOUDA Malachie, informs the general public that MPOX, also known as Monkeypox, has been declared a "**Public Health Emergency of Continental Concern**" on 13 August 2024, given the unprecedented spread of this disease on the continent. Indeed, many African countries, known to be endemic or not, are experiencing MPOX epidemics, including the Democratic Republic of Congo, Central African Republic, Nigeria, Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda, Kenya.

This declaration of a Public Health Emergency of Continental Concern calls on countries, particularly Cameroon, to remain on alert and to redouble their vigilance, especially since an active epidemic is currently rife in certain border regions of the CAR and we continue to record endemic cases in some health districts of our country. Monkeypox is a disease transmitted from animals to humans mainly through rodents. Human-to-human transmission is also possible. It most often manifests by skin rashes accompanied by fever.

Cameroon is a country known to be endemic for MPOX with outbreaks recorded almost every year. The most commonly affected regions are the Southwest, Northwest, Littoral, Centre and East. Since the beginning of 2024, 30 suspected cases, 05 confirmed cases and 02 deaths have been recorded with active outbreaks in the Southwest (Mbonge, Buea and Limbe Health District) and Northwest (Njikwa and Bamenda Health Districts) regions.

The Ministry of Public Health, in collaboration with other administrations and its technical and financial partners, have undertaken measures to contain and control the spread of the epidemic in Cameroon and to avoid the importation of additional cases. Furthermore, epidemiological surveillance has been strengthened in risk areas, particularly epidemic regions and Health Districts bordering the CAR. Investigations and active search for cases and contact persons in epidemic Health Districts are continuing. Sensitization and community mobilization activities are also being strengthened.

The Minister of Public Health recommends that people should immediately go to the nearest health facility as soon as symptoms appear. He also invites everyone to respect standard hygiene rules such as:

- **wash hands regularly with clean running water and soap, especially after:**
 - o **handling an animal or a product of animal origin**
 - o **taking care of a person with symptoms of monkeypox**
- **avoid contact with the body fluids of sick people, including unprotected sex**
- **avoid contact with sick or dead wild animals;**
- **wash and eat well cooked and hot food.**

The Minister of Public Health reminds his collaborators in health facilities that monkeypox treatment is free of charge. To this end, he calls on the media to provide the public with information on preventive measures for this pathology, which is a contagious and deadly disease.

For additional information, call the toll-free number 1130



Dr. Manouada Malachie