

No new H7N9 cases in China for second week

May 27 2013

No new human cases of the deadly H7N9 bird flu strain were recorded in China for the second week in a row, national health authorities said Monday, suggesting the outbreak has slowed.

The total number of fatalities from the virus stands at 37, after one previously infected patient died in the week beginning May 20, the National Health and Family Planning Commission said in a statement.

But the total number of confirmed cases was unchanged at 130. Of those, 76 have recovered and been discharged from hospital, it said, adding that no evidence of human-to-human transmission had been detected so far.

One other case was recorded in Taiwan.

Experts fear the possibility of the virus mutating into a form easily transmissible between humans, with the potential to trigger a pandemic.

[Flu viruses](#) are often seasonal and much of China is experiencing warmer weather following the end of winter.

But the world is not ready to deal with a major pandemic, the deputy head of the [World Health Organization](#) told a conference last week, despite efforts since an outbreak of another form of avian influenza, H1N1, in 2009-10.

"Even though work has been done since that time, the world is not ready

for a large, severe outbreak," Keiji Fukuda said.

China was accused of covering up the outbreak of [Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome](#) (SARS) that killed about 800 people around the world a decade ago, but Chan thanked authorities for their close collaboration with the WHO over H7N9.

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