Jordan records two new MERS infections

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Two new infections from MERS coronavirus have been detected in Jordan, the health ministry said Thursday, one a Saudi man and the other a Jordanian medic who was treating him.

State news agency Petra which carried the report said this brought to seven the total number of people who were diagnosed in Jordan with the disease known as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome since 2012.

Health ministry official Mohammad Abdallat told Petra that the Saudi man aged 25 was being treated in a private Amman hospital.

"The Jordanian medic, 28 got infected while he was treating the Saudi patient. He is in a stable condition," Abdallat, who heads the ministry's communicable disease unit, said without elaborating.

Jordan reported the first death of MERS virus this year in February, after two previous fatalities in 2012.

MERS first emerged in 2012 and is mostly focused on Saudi Arabia where it has killed 107 people, according to health officials in the oil-rich kingdom.

Saudi health authorities said Wednesday that the number of those diagnosed with the disease had risen to 361.

MERS is considered a deadlier but less-transmissible cousin of the SARS virus that erupted in Asia in 2003 and infected 8,273 people, nine

percent of whom died.

There are no vaccines or antiviral treatments for MERS, a severe respiratory disease with a mortality rate of more than 40 percent that experts are still struggling to understand.

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