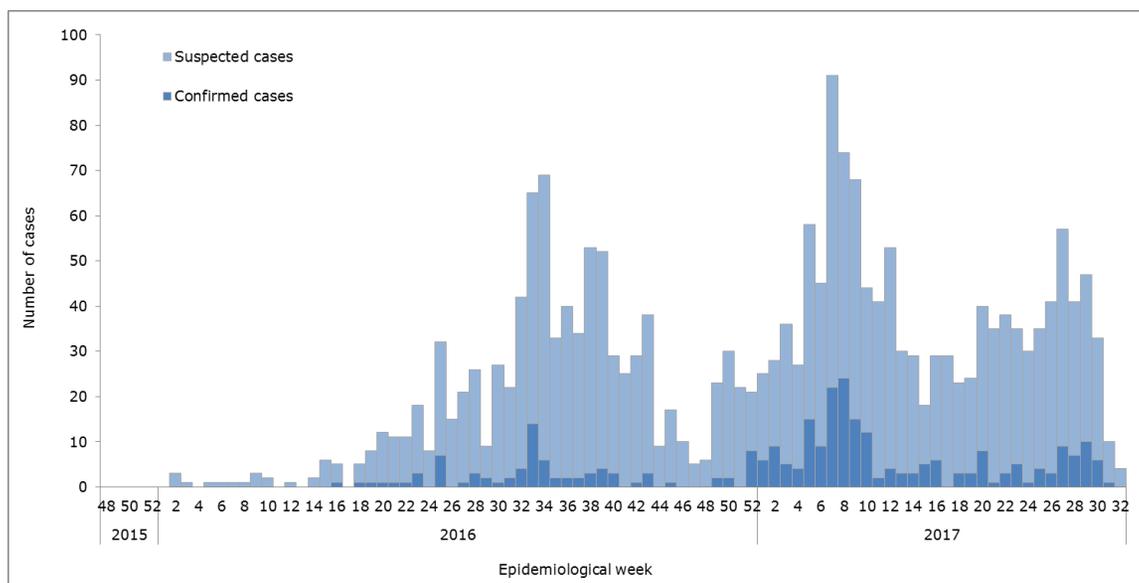


Zika-Epidemiological Report Belize

25 September 2017

Figure 1. Suspected and confirmed Zika cases by epidemiological week (EW), Belize. EW 48 of 2015 to EW 32 of 2017.



Source: Data provided by the Belize Ministry of Health to PAHO/WHO¹

FIRST AUTOCHTHONOUS VECTOR-BORNE CASES

In epidemiological week (EW) 20 of 2016, the Belize International Health Regulations (IHR) National Focal Point (NFP) reported to PAHO/WHO the detection of two autochthonous cases of Zika in Belize City and Cayo District. This followed a previous report in EW 14 of 2016 by the United States of America health authorities of an imported case of Zika virus disease with travel history to Belize.

GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION

No information on the geographic distribution of Zika cases is available.

TREND

From EW 2 to EW 19 of 2016, low numbers of Zika cases were reported in Belize, with an average of 2 suspected and confirmed cases being reported per week (**Figure 1**).¹ From EW 20 onwards,

¹ Reported to PAHO/WHO from the Belize International Health Regulation (IHR) National Focal Point (NFP) on 23 August 2017.

the number of cases began to increase significantly, with a first peak being reported in EW 34 (n=69 cases). A second, more pronounced peak was observed in EW 7 of 2017 (n=91 cases). Since then, progressively lower numbers of Zika cases were reported in Belize, with a slight increase in cases between EW 25 and EW 27. In the last 8 weeks (EW 25 to EW 32 of 2017), an average of 34 suspected and confirmed cases per week have been registered).

CIRCULATION OF OTHER ARBOVIRUSES

In 2017, as of EW 29, a total of 15 probable dengue cases and 4 confirmed have been reported in Belize.² In 2016, the Belize health authorities reported 192 probable cases (incidence rate of 55 cases per 100,000 population) and one confirmed case of dengue up to EW 46.² According to the Belize Ministry of Health, the number of confirmed dengue cases increased between 2009 and 2012, from 1,370 to 2,041 respectively.³

No information on the number of chikungunya cases reported in 2017 is available. In 2016, the Belize health authorities reported 58 suspected cases and one confirmed case (16 cases per 100,000) of chikungunya.⁴

ZIKA VIRUS DISEASE IN PREGNANT WOMEN

One case reported in EW 20 of 2016 from Cayo District was 22 weeks pregnant at the time of diagnosis.⁵

ZIKA COMPLICATIONS

ZIKA-VIRUS-ASSOCIATED GUILLAIN-BARRÉ SYNDROME (GBS)

As of EW 35 of 2017, no cases of Guillain-Barré syndrome (GBS) associated with Zika virus infection have been reported by the Belize health authorities to PAHO/WHO.

CONGENITAL SYNDROME ASSOCIATED WITH ZIKA VIRUS INFECTION

As of EW 32 of 2017, two suspected cases of congenital syndrome associated with Zika virus infection have been reported by the Belize health authorities to PAHO/WHO.¹

DEATHS AMONG ZIKA CASES

As of EW 35 of 2017, no deaths among Zika cases have been reported by the Belize health authorities to PAHO/WHO.

NATIONAL ZIKA SURVEILLANCE GUIDELINES

An epidemiological alert was issued by the Belize Ministry of Health to outline steps for increased Zika virus surveillance. More information is available at:

http://health.gov.bz/www/attachments/article/878/PAPU%20Newsletter%202016_Volume%202,%20Issue%201.pdf

² PAHO/WHO. Data, Maps and Statistics. Number of reported cases of Dengue and Severe Dengue (SD) in the Americas by Country. Available at:

http://www.paho.org/hq/index.php?option=com_topics&view=readall&cid=3273&Itemid=40734&lang=en

³ Belize Ministry of Health. Belize Health Sector Strategic Plan 2014-2024. April 2014. Available at:

<http://health.gov.bz/www/attachments/article/801/Belize%20Health%20Sector%20Strategic%20Plan%202014-2024-April%202014.pdf>

⁴ PAHO/WHO. Chikungunya – Number of Reported Cases of Chikungunya Fever in the Americas, by Country. Available at:

http://www.paho.org/hq/index.php?option=com_topics&view=readall&cid=5927&Itemid=40931&lang=en

⁵ Reported to PAHO/WHO from the Belize Ministry of Health on 26 May 2017.

LABORATORY CAPACITY

Samples from suspected cases of Zika virus disease are sent to the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) for laboratory testing. In addition, samples are sent to the *Instituto de Diagnóstico y Referencia* (InDRE) in Mexico for molecular confirmation.

INFORMATION-SHARING

Information on Zika is periodically provided by the Belize IHR NFP to PAHO/WHO. At the time of this report, the latest information available received from the Belize IHR NFP was from EW 32 of 2017.